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REFLECTIONS
Upon the uſe of the K
Eloquence
Of theſe Times.

Tranſlated out of French.

OXFORD
Printed and ſold by the Book-ſellers there, *Anno* 1672.

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Upon the use of the

Eloquence

Of the Age of Times.

BRITISH MUSEUM

OXFORD

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REFLECTIONS
Upon the uſe of the *ELOQUENCE* of theſe times

In generall.

ALthough the power of true *Eloquence* be more abſolute than either that of authority, or violence, to which men do not ordinarily ſubmit but out of compliance, or conſtraint: yet this very power as all others are, is ſubject to revolutions and decays. For in the age in which we live, we have much adoe to find any reliques of that Empire which *Eloquence* formerly exercis'd over the minds of men, and of which ſuch illuſtrious marks are to be ſeen in all thoſe ages and States in which ſhe hath reign'd.

There are none of those miracles done at present by the force of words, nor any master-peices of discourse which appear'd in *Athens* & in *Rome*, when Eloquence was mistress there.

Let us not then flatter our selves with the pretended glory of our age, which we unadvisedly prefer before all others. For what Orator is there at this day, who is master of the resolutions of them to whom he speaks, so as to force them to lay aside their prejudices, and to renounce their opinions? Men have formerly seen *Eloquence* in the turning of a hand reestablish a calm in the midst of the most violent agitations of a mutinous and inflam'd multitude: she hath been seen to make unexpected impressions upon minds prepossess'd with prejudice in the confus'd deliberations of a tumultuous assembly: she hath appeas'd seditions by inspiring that boldness into the timerous, which she

ſhe hath taken from the inſolent and rebellious, conſtraining both the one and the other to pay an abſolute obedience to her commands. She hath alſo been ſeen in Armies to go from rank to rank, and reſtore courage unto Souldiers by the mouth of Generals, and to triumph at laſt by the armes of thoſe, whom ſhe had firſt ſubdued by her reaſons.

But to ſay the truth, there remains nothing to us at preſent, but a vain ſhadow of that victorious *Eloquence* which we only poſſeſs in it's Idea. Let us therefore examine from whence this diſorder comes, in a time in which men concern themſelves ſo much, and make ſuch pretenſions to Wit; and in my opinion theſe are the reflections which may be made on this ſubject, and on the uſe of the *Eloquence* of theſe times in generall.

I.

Ariſtotle, *Cicero*, *Quintilian*, & *Longinus*, who have left us the moſt ac-

compliſh'd Treatiſes of Rhetorique which are to be found in antiquity, remark that the eloquence, which hath formerly bin ſeen in *Athens* and *Rome*, before thoſe two Republiques had loſt their liberty, can reign no where but amongſt a free and independent people. She is a proud and haughty miſtreſs, and cannot ſubmit either to ſlavery or flattery: ſhe ſeems in her character to compriſe that of monarchy, which cannot ſubject it ſelfe without cauſing it's own ruine. And *Ariſtotle* pretends that ſhe had no ſucceſs at all in *Sicily*, whilſt tyrants were the maſters of that Iſland, although all other arts flouriſh't therein. This is the opinion of theſe great men, who certainly were capable judges of her; but yet they have ſuffer'd themſelves a little to be prepoſſeſs'd in favour of that government under which they were educated.

As

II.

As thoſe honours which Greece pay'd to Eloquence made her conſiderable to other Nations, and as ſhe had no ſucceſs at *Rome* but what ſhe owed to thoſe great recompences which attended her, ſo ſhe loſt her credit there as ſoon as thoſe began to ceaſe. Since then the fruit which ariſeth from this art at preſent, is ſo unproportionable to the trouble and application which it requires, we muſt not wonder if there be ſo few Orators found, who are courageous enough to undergoe the toil of it; [x] eſpecially when ſhe is not ſupported by any of thoſe hopes to which men are ſpur'd on by intereſt or ambition. By the means of *Eloquence* perſons arriv'd at all honours whatever, in thoſe States in which ſhe rul'd; and in the time in

[x] *Sibi perſuaſerunt neminem ſine eloquentia, aut aſſequi poſſe in civitate, aut tueri conſpicuum & eminentem locum.* De cauſ. corrupt. Eloq.

which

which we are, they arrive at nothing, or at very little by the ſame way: which thing is very apt to extinguiſh that ardour which is neceſſary to the ſtudy of Eloquence, and alienate mens minds from her.

III.

The greatneſs of *Genius* which *Eloquence* requires, and which we ſearch for, is ſcarce any where to be found: it is the gift of heaven, and the work of many ages. For beſides the happineſs of birth as to pronunciation, a collection of all thoſe naturall qualities only, which are requiſite to make men ſucceed well in the art of ſpeaking, is extreamly rare. There is required ſublimity of Wit, depth of judgment form'd by a naturall ſolidity, which is to be perfected by a good inſight into worldly affairs, and by a profound knowledge in all ſorts of Learning. There is alſo requiſite a great extent of memory

memory and imagination, an eaſie comprehenſion, a clear and diſtinct voice, an aſpect which hath nothing offenſive, a reaſonable force of the Lungs, a vigorous and ſmart Pronunciation, a look of Authority, and ſeverall other qualities, which being commonly incompetible in themſelves, can very hardly be found altogether. Which [x] gave *Cicero* occaſion even in his time, when *Eloquence* was ſo flouriſhing, to complain, that hardly in an age were there two Orators found, who deſerv'd eſteem. Not but that after all, this may be as well found now, as it hath been formerly; for nature is as liberal of her gifts in theſe latter times, as ſhe hath bin heretofore: but generally we either have not underſtanding and light enough to diſcover theſe qualities in our ſelves when they are there, or not diligence

[x] *Cernimus vix ſingulis ætatibus binos oratores laudabiles extitiſſe.* De Orat.

and

and care enough to cultivate them; ſo that they are in us, as if they were not there.

IV.

Beſides thoſe naturall parts which are neceſſary to make a man eloquent, there is alſo requir'd great learning and a ſingular diligence. And indeed theſe were the three things which [x] render'd the Eloquence of *Brutus*, whom *Cicero* commends ſo much, ſo very perfect. Wherefore a ſtrict retirement, and a conſtant aſſiduity of Study are requiſite, to the end that the mind may be furniſh'd with whatſoever is neceſſary to *Eloquence*. And it will be very fit to draw from the ſpring-head, and ſtudy throughly Ancient writers, eſpecially thoſe who are moſt authentick: And in ſhort to make *Ariſtotles* Rhetorique the ſubject of

[x] *Erat in Bruto natura admirabilis, exquiſita doctrina, & induſtria ſingularis.* De Claris Orat.

make

our [x] conſtant meditations, who hath taken the pains to expound all the paſſions of mans heart as it were by parcels ſo exactly. The *Orator* ought to make this the firſt ground-plot of his ſtudy, that he may excite the minds of his Auditors by moving their affections, which are indeed the true ſprings of that Machin, which is ſo difficult to be mov'd, when men take not time enough ſo to ſtudy it, as to underſtand it. And truly unleſs he lay in as it were a great ſtock of learning, he will not only be uncapable of deciding differences, and of making himſelf be hearken'd unto as an Oracle, (which ought to be very ordinary with him) but even his very mind will not be capable of making any rationall production, according to the opinion of a very judicious Critick: *neque concipere, neque*

[x] *Multo labore, aſſiduo ſtudio, varia exercitatione, pluribus experimentis, altiſſimâ prudentiâ, præſtantiſſimo conſilio, conſtat ars dicendi.* Fab. l. 2. c. 13.

edere

edere partum mens potest, nisi ingenti flumine literarum undata. How can he poſſibly inform others, except he be inſtructed himſelf, and how can he perſwade others, except he himſelf be perſwaded? And who is that perſon who can undergoe the pains of ſo obſtinate a ſtudy, and of ſo great a perſeverance as that of an Orator ought to be, who ſhould be ignorant in nothing?

V.

True *Eloquence* being ſo difficult to be obtain'd, men have contented themſelves with the appearance of a falſe one, which was in uſe amongſt the Greeks and Latines, when their Republiques began to decline, and which could only ſubſiſt whilſt they were in ſlavery. Thoſe Sophiſters, whoſe lives *Philoſtratus* and *Eunapius* have written, diſpers'd this falſe Eloquence, which

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conſiſts only in exterior actions, and wild and aery diſcourſes, that had no other aime or deſigne, but to amuſe the common people. But as this *Eloquence* was by no means naturall, and as its Schemes and ornaments only ſerv'd to weaken it ſelf, ſo all its motions were falſe, it never touch'd the heart nor enter'd into the ſoul: it only tickled the ſenſes with a ſuperficiall pleaſure, and was nothing but a ſimple Paſtime for thoſe who were lazy and had nothing to do.

But as it is univerſally in all things very eaſy to miſtake falſhood for truth, becauſe the one offers it ſelf on its own accord to the mind, whereas the other is not to be found without ſtudy and pains, as alſo becauſe the firſt is boundleſs through the multiplicity of appearances which diſguiſe it, whereas the other is but one, and conſiſts as it were in an indiviſible point: we ought then

then not to wonder if the ſhadow be often taken for the ſubſtance in eloquence as well as in other things. But thoſe who diſcern aright, find that there are very few truly eloquent and perfect Orators, and that the greateſt part of thoſe who ſpeak in publique, are nothing elſe but meer Declamers.

VI.

Men [x] ſcarce ever exercis'd themſelves in that way which is the moſt ordinary and the moſt ſure imaginable to arrive at true Eloquence, which is, the frequent exerciſe of compoſitions: whereunto we ought to apply our ſelves with great aſſiduity that we may obtain an habit of it: ſince there is no advantage equall to that which we receive from thence. It [y] is by this way that *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero* arriv'd at that

[x] *Nulla res tantum ad dicendam proficit quantum Scriptio.* Cic. in Brut.

[y] *Caput eſt, quod minime facimus: eſt enim magni laboris quod fugimus, quam plurimum ſcribere.* 1. de Orat.

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degree of perfection which is known to the whole world: and not to ſpeak of the former, who cloiſter'd up himſelf ſo many years, that he might form and faſhion himſelf unto Eloquence, every body knows that the latter employed all the ſpare time which his affairs would allow him, in exerciſeing himſelf to ſpeak well by the frequent uſe of compoſition.

VII.

Men doe not make it their buſineſs to ſpeak correctly, nor to frame exact draughts of things; for commonly they ſay either too much, or too little. The middle way which ought to be kept, is underſtood by few, becauſe it is not eaſily diſcernable, and becauſe few rules can be given by which we may know it. And as an expert painter is able to diſtinguiſh paſſions, in thoſe different ſubjects in which he expreſſes them; (for he doth not make the

the joy of a Prince like that of a slave, nor the fierceness of a common Souldier like that of a General) so in the motions of the soul there are different degrees, which the Orator ought to distinguish, that he may not confound the Images of things: which after all, is comprehended and understood well only by those who are masters of this art. The ignorance of this principle so little practic'd, makes men, who are not perfectly accomplish'd in Eloquence, draw false lines and ill pictures of things. In the multitude of Idea's which present themselves to the mind, there is nothing more important than the makeing a judicious and fit choice, and not to take the false for the true. Now this requires an exact and discerning judgment, a great experience, and an exquisite understanding. We ought above all things to consider, that in those extremities to which the heat

heat of our [x] Genius doth ſometimes carry us, the exceſs of ſpeaking too much doth always more offend, then that of ſpeaking too little. And this is that which the Roman Orator repeat's ſo often in his books of Rhetorique: for ſpeaking too much and with too great zeal, is always a mark that the Orator is carried away by a violent and headſtrong paſſion, which is certainly a great fault; whereas ſpeaking too little is a ſigne of modeſty and a diſcreet moderation, which is by all eſteem'd a vertue.

VIII.

We doe not take care enough to ſtudy our own naturall inclination, that we might follow its bent without putting it to any conſtraint, by affecting certain manners of acting, which are not agreeable to it, or by forcing it by ſuch violent ſtudies

[x] *In omnibus rebus videndum quatenus: etſi enim ſuus cuique modus eſt, tamen magis offendit nimium quam parum. de Clar. Orat.*

as plainly oppreſſe it; or in fine by aſſuming a bigger port, a prouder carriage, or more artifice, then it its capable to ſupport and maintaine. And this, as *Cicero* remarks, began to make Eloquence degenerate from that greatneſs which it had in Athens, under *Pericles*, *Lyſias*, *Eſchines* and *Demoſthenes*, becauſe *Demetrius Phalereus*, that he might ſucceed better therein, affected more art then his Genius was able to bear.

IX.

Pronunciation, which is one of the moſt important parts of Eloquence, is that which is moſt neglected; it is this which renders Eloquence ſenſible to the people by the outward deportment and behaviour, and which hath power and art by its appearances to impoſe upon mens minds, when deſtitute of real arguments. If it's power be ſo great as

Phalereus non tam armis, quam palæſtra inſtitutus. Cic. in Brut.

to

to make impreſſions in the ſouls of men even in faign'd and imaginary ſubjects, as in Comedy's on the ſtage we ſee it doth, what can it not do in true and reall ones? But this admirable art becomes uſeleſs to thoſe who ſpeak in publique, by reaſon of the ſmall care they take to benefit themſelves by it, and to apply themſelves thereunto. It is true that a natural faculty is requir'd to ſucceed well therein, but when that failes, a ſerious endeavour may well ſupply that defect. The eloquence of *Demoſthenes* became more admir'd by his pronunciation, although he wanted a natural diſpoſition thereunto, & he was oblig'd for his good ſucceſs only to that conſtraint which he lay'd upon himſelf to acquire it. But becauſe men ſuffer themſelves to be too eaſily diſcourag'd by theſe difficulties, and becauſe they cannot reſolve to take thoſe pains which are requir'd to form them to this exer-

ciſe, they looſe that great advantage which pronunciation gives an Orator, both by rendring his Perſon agreable, and by inſpiring an expreſſive paſſion into his very eyes and Looks. So that we may juſtly ſay that nothing doth more hinder the ordinary effects of Eloquence, than the little care which Orators take of their behaviour and deportment, the faults of which become by ſo much the more conſpicuous, by how much men are more delicate in their reliſhes of Eloquence: which profeſſing to be an art whoſe true end is to pleaſe, can find nothing more oppoſite to it's ſelf, than to offend & diſguſt by uncomely action.

X.

Thoſe who make it their profeſſion to ſpeak in publique are not careful enough to put Logick in uſe; and this proceed's either from a pure neglect of inſtructing themſelves in it, or from

a natural inability to the practiſe of it, or in ſhort from a naughty affectation of not troubling themſelves with, or thinking of it. Complemental diſcourſes, in which neither the intereſt of the ſtate, nor that of religion is concern'd, and which only ſerve for ornament, are commonly thoſe in which Logick is leaſt imploy'd, becauſe they are too looſe and too abſtract, by reaſon of the general matters of which they treat. Indeed Logick is the cheif rule of diſcourſe, and the univerſal organ of ſpeech: to diſcourſe without this inſtrument, is properly nothing elſe but to beat the air and to make a noiſe; for nothing can be judiciouſly ſpoken, or indeed is tolerable without it. And yet how much is it neglected? and when men make uſe of it, what extravagancies do they make it commit, either by the conſtraint they lay upon it, or the confuſion of ex-

preſſions with which they clog and encumber it; or in a word by the Idea which they form to themſelves of falſe ratiocinations, to ſupply the defects of true reaſon, which can only be found in a cleer even & piercing underſtanding. The rarity of this, makes eloquence ſo defective as it is in the greateſt part of thoſe who make profeſſion of it; for the reaſonings upon wch they eſtabliſh it, are either too far fetch'd, or too little purſu'd, or falſe and imaginary; and thoſe who examine things well, will find, that commonly the Eloquence us'd in theſe times, hath no defect which is more eſſential than that of ratiocination, to which they have not care enough to frame themſelves: which indeed is not ſo well to be obtain'd by that ſtudy of Logick which is generally taught, as by reading the Rhetorick of *Ariſtole*, and by a frequent converſation with good books, the reading

ing of which imprint's in our minds an evenneſs of judgement, which cannot be obtain'd without it. This is ſometimes a gift which comes purely from nature; but when men are born without it, it is no way to be obtain'd but by the uſe of books, of which a good choice is to be made; for there are ſome which inſtead of rectifying the judgment, are apt to ſpoil and corrupt it. Herein we muſt take the advice of Learned men, when we are not able to direct our ſelves; a thing which few perſons are capable of doing, and young men leſs than others, whoſe minds have not bin ſeaſon'd by experience, and the knowledg of the world. But although the want of Logick be moſt common with thoſe who appear in publique, yet it is that which will not be eaſily diſcover'd. For only underſtanding men (who are but few in number) are capable of detecting it. Not but that the common peo-

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ple do eaſily comprehend the natural conſequences of a diſcourſe, and all the Logick therein contain'd, without knowing it to be ſuch: but their light doth not go ſo far as to ſee all the faults in a ratiocination, or all the defects in the ordering and proſecuting of a deſign: upon upon which we may make as it were three degrees of ability. The firſt is that of thoſe men who ſtop only at words for to judge either of their defects or beauty. The ſecond is that of thoſe who advance yet farther, and who make a judgment of thoughts. The third is that of thoſe who come up ſo high as to judge of the deſign, the conſequences, & proportions of the parts of a diſcourſe, and this only belongs to underſtanding perſons. And certainly men ought to be ſo, to find out the real failings in Logick. For beſides that there are ſome Orators who by a certain charm of words & thoughs, with which they

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ſurpriſe their Auditours, will not give them liberty to examine the bottom of their diſcourſe: there are yet others who dazle their underſtandings by certain pleaſant and grateful manners of delivering the things they treat of. I have known a famous preacher of this kind, who was always applauded and pleas'd very much, although his diſcourſe was neither methodical nor cloſe; but to ſay the truth he pleas'd only women and ignorant perſons, whilſt Learned men eſteem'd him but little.

XI.

When we apply our ſelves to the ſtudy of eloquence, we are often us'd to miſtake our ſelves by the falſe meaſures we are us'd to take, either of our ſelves, or of our ſubject, or of thoſe to whom we ſpeak: aud this failing is as common as that which I lately mention'd. An Orator who has good parts, ſometimes erres, by too much pleaſing himſelf with his own

compoſitions, without having reſpect to his ſubject, or to the capacity of thoſe to whom he ſpeaks. It is much more eaſy for him to be carried away by the current of his phancy, then to regulate himſelf according to the circumſtances of thoſe things of wch he treats: the one being the meer effect of the imagination, and the other of the judgment, which is a gift exceedingly rare. So that it is no wonder if thoſe who ſpeak in publique are ſubject to this diſorder, from whence thoſe ridiculous indecencies & thoſe offenſive diſproportions, which are commonly found in publique diſcourſes, ariſe; as to put on a grave look in a ſlight affair; to affect great expreſſions in trifling ſubjects; to aim at wit before a mean Auditory; to be warm and pathetical upon ſubjects which do not deſerve it. [a] Eloquence ceaſes to be true when it's expreſſi-

[a] *Refert cognoſcere, qui ſint audientium mores, quæ publicè recepta perſuaſio* Fab. *l.*3. *c.* 7.

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ons ceaſe to bear proportion to the capacity of thoſe to whom it ſpeaks, becauſe it cannot enter into the mind any other way, but by the agreeableneſs of thoſe reaſons which it makes uſe of to enlighten it. The diverſity of ages, ſexes, fortunes, conditions, and knowledge either acquir'd or natural, ought to oblige the Orator to take different ways of proportioning himſelf to the underſtandings of men of all thoſe diverſe conditions.

XII.

x We muſt know in general how to diſtinguiſh the diverſe kinds of Eloquence, that we may make uſe of them according as the ſubjects we treat of ſhall require, without confounding them, wch is never done but with diſadvantage, becauſe in this art nothing can ſucceed well out of its own place. The higheſt Eloquence ought to ap-

x *Ut gubernatori ad incurſus tempeſtatum, ſic agenti ad varietatem cauſarum ratio mutanda. Quintil. l.* 10. *cap.* 7.

pear

pear in great places amongſt multitudes, and the concourſe of people, eſpecially before Perſons of quality, where large diſcourſes, and greatneſs of expreſſions are to be made uſe of. This kind of Eloquence ought alſo to be practis'd in the nobleſt ſubjects and affaires of moment; whereas on the other ſide, the meaner require an eaſy & natural ſtyle without any affected expreſſions. *Praiſes demand a lofty and diffuſive ſtyle, but accuſations that which is cloſe and ſharp. *In a word that eloquence is perfect, which uſes words proportionable to the nature of things, and can deliver her ſelf freely without any trouble or diſorder. But yet there are two rocks to be avoided in diſcourſe, which are a frigid, and a boyiſh ſtyle, *becauſe the firſt renders a diſcourſe

* *Tenues cauſæ tenue dicendi filum requirunt.* Orat. x *Oratio poſcitur auſtera ſi accuſes, fuſa ſi laudes.* Quintil. l. 9. c. 4. x *Loquendi accurata, & ſine moleſtia diligens elegantia.* Cic. in Brut.

dry

dry and inſipid by the weakneſs and lowneſs of it's expreſſions, and the ſecond renders it offenſive and tedious by thoſe affected amplifications and impertinent inlargements, with which it wearies the patience of it's Auditours.

XII.

Although *Longinus* does in a manner confound theſe two ſtyles which I now mention, yet they may be thus diſtinguiſh'd: thoſe who affect the frigid ſtyle make uſe of great expreſſions when they ſpeak of ſubjects which require little ones, and thoſe who affect the boyiſh, make uſe of low expreſſions when they treat of matters in wch greater are requir'd: but our language is become ſo modeſt, ſo reſerv'd, and ſo ſcrupulous, that ſhe accounts even thoſe expreſſions which are too ſtrong and flanting, as alſo thoſe metaphors which are too bold, and the too frequent flaſhes of wit, to be parts of the frigid ſtyle; as on the other

ther ſide, too much ſporting and lightneſs in ſerious matters, and tedious amplifications in thoſe parts of diſcourſe which ought to be compact and cloſe, are by her look'd upon as parts of the boyiſh ſtyle.

XIII.

A man cannot ſucceed well in the lofty ſtile of the ſublimeſt kind, except he be perfectly perſwaded, that the great images which he makes to himſelf of things, and the elevation of his Genius, do take their form and beginning rather from the very things which he hath to ſay, than from the height of expreſſion, from the luſtre and beauty of words, or from the retinue and train of his far fetch'd Periphraſes: which as *Longinus* remarks, are like plumpneſs of fleſh, which though it is eſteem'd to to give handſomeneſs and beauty, yet it often ſerves only to load the body with an inconvenient weight, & hinder it's motion. When a lofty

ſtyle

ſtyle is not natural, it always degenerates into a low and creeping one: for it cannot ſupport it ſelf but by it ſelf. *Pindar* and *Sophocles* raiſe themſelves up ſometimes ſo high by the greatneſs of their expreſſions, that we have much adoe to comprehend or follow them, but not being able to maintain this height which is not natural, as not being in the things they ſpeak of, they are forc'd to ſtoop ſo low and creep, that one would not eaſily know them. This is a defect which cannot be pardon'd, for it is a part of preſumption to aime and deſign to appear great, and not to be ſo; and to raiſe ones ſelf without being powerful enough to keep at the ſame height; the* great buſineſs is, to have proportionate conceptions, and to make uſe of no other words than thoſe which correſpond to the dignity of the ſubject which is treated of.

* *Oratio ſententiis debet eſſe ornatior quam verbis.* Fab.

XV.

As the fault of the greateſt witts is a negligence in meaſuring themſelves to the capacity of their ſubject, or Auditory; ſo that of leſſer is too ſcrupulous a care and too affected a diligence of tying themſelves more than they ought, to dreſs up ſome certain paſſages of their diſcourſe in which they pride themſelves; which is a meer effect of the littleneſs of Genius, when men ſtop at a part of a deſign, becauſe they are not able nor happy enough to contrive a whole one. Theſe narrow witts ſuffer themſelves to be led aſide by a falſe principle, which they would juſtify by authority of *Maximus Tyrius*, who pretend's that Art hath always ſomething more perfect in her than Nature, and that there are no natural beauties to be found, which are ſo accompliſh'd, as certain well wrought ſtatues. I do not intend to enter into a diſpute with this Philoſopher

ſopher concerning this principle: but eloquence being an Art whoſe only end is to pleaſe (which it cannot do but by imitating nature) this maxime of thoſe who attribute ſo much to Art, evinces it not to be the ſureſt way to perſwade. And I declare that it is not only a falſe one, but alſo by too childiſh an obſerving thoſe precepts which men learn whilſt they are young, they frame to themſelves a very ill Idea of Eloquence. We need only to conſult the *Agamemnon* of *Petronius* to comprehend the ridiculouſneſs of that Eloquence which hath nothing that is natural in it, but ties it ſelf too much to the exterior ornaments, which men would have paſs for the moſt eſſential parts of it. There is no other true bottome of eloquence, but good ſence; and as that is the moſt neceſſary, and withal moſt rare qualification for thoſe who ſpeak in publique; ſo we ought not to wonder if we find

but

but few perfect Orators; who cannot be made except in happy times, and amongst discerning people.

XVI.

The greatest & most soveraign art of Eloquence consists in exactly following of nature as its true model & first original; of which nevertheless men have but little knowledge by reason of the small care they take, to read it in it's footsteps, and observe it's conduct. We ought therefore to study how to understand this great exemplar, and examine all it's turnings by a profound enquiry into philosophy, and by a long observation of natural things. For in Eloquence, as soon as ever we quit nature, every thing becomes false: the heat of it's most passionate motions is but a false one, the splendor of the most illustrious schemes which it puts on is also false, the most vehement force of it's argumentations hath no reality in it, and

and is nothing elſe but the declamation of a Sophiſter, & a meer illuſion.

XVII.

There is ſcarce any conſtruction to be found in the greateſt parts of their diſcourſes, who take upon themſelves to ſpeak in publique, by reaſon of the little care they take to ſtudy throughly the rules of ſpeaking. Thoſe whoſe Genius inclines them to Eloquence, have much adoe to bring down themſelves to thoſe little and ſcrupulous cares, which are neceſſary to ſucceed well therein: the natural height of their wit will not ſuffer them to ſtoop to circumſpections of this nature: and thoſe who have no Genius at all thereto, are ſubject to fall into the errors of affectation, that by their words they may ſupply their want of judgement.

XVIII.

The moſt ordinary defects wch we meet with in expreſſion, than wch nothing is more eſſential to Eloquence,

ariſes entirely from the natural defect of apprehenſion; for when the imagination is too lively, too fiery, and too brisk: expreſſion fall's into a flux, as it were, and ſuperfluity of words: when ſhe is too luxuriant and confus'd, then it fall's into unintelligible, obſcure, and bombaſtick lines: and to conclude, when ſhe is too cold, too heavy, and too much perplext, it becomes weak and barren.

XIX.

Men ſcarce ever ſtudy that juſt proportion, which they ought to uſe in their diſcourſe, of Reaſon with Authority, and of compariſon & ſimilitude, with example and Induction. And even in that uſe wch they make of theſe great inſtruments of perſwaſion, they do not take care enough ſo to range their reaſons, that by the rank and order in which they are plac'd, they might maintain, defend,

and

and ſupport, the one the other. For the ſtrongſt reaſons ought to ſucceed the weak ones, and the ſolideſt thoſe wᵇʰ are leſs ſo, to the end that the diſcourſe may always not only ſuſtain, and hold up, but alſo raiſe it ſelf as it were by degrees to the height of perfection. And this is a thing of ſo great importance, that the want alone of putting this obſervation in practiſe, often renders thoſe ratiocinations, which in themſelves are moſt ſtrong and moſt ſolid, very ineffective: for they become weak from the very inſtant that the proportion of reaſons is not obſerv'd. Now this proportion conſiſts in alledging no weak arguments, after ſtrong ones have have been urg'd: for the laſt reaſon which is given, is that which remaines longeſt in the mind, and therefore ought to be the moſt ſolid one. Beſides the management & placeing of arguments, which ought to be put in their natural or-

der, without confuſion; we muſt alſo play the good husbands in the uſe which we make of inſtances, that we may not expoſe and neceſſitate our ſelves to multiply them laviſhly and inconſiderately. For an Orator muſt have that admirable Art, which teaches how to retrench and cut off ſuperfluities in things, as well as words, and to ſuppreſs all too frequent ornaments, without being carried away by heat of imagination, which is naturally inclin'd to ſuffer it ſelf to be led aſide by vain and fantaſtick ſhews, which have no ſolidity in them. Eloquence cannot make all the ſprings and motions of it's art goe with good ſucceſs, without theſe precautions, which are of the greateſt conſequence, becauſe they reduce things to their natural ſtate: but theſe obſervations are very little practis'd, becauſe as little underſtood.

XX.

That Eloquence which only touches the

the fancy but enters not into the very heart, is no true Eloquence; it is at beſt but a meer leſſon, and ought to be in uſe no where but at ſchool; and indeed all thoſe beauties which pleaſe the fancy, but peirce not the heart, are falſe and imperfect. Nay even that great deportment, which *Longinus* doth teach us, doth not (as he himſelf confeſſeth) ſo much affect as dazle and aſtoniſh, becauſe it enters not into the thoughts of the Auditors. Great expreſſions without great thoughts and weighty matter, are almoſt like thoſe ſhips, which want ballaſt, which may float, but never ſaile ſecurely.

XXI.

[a] That Eloquence in general which takes too much care to range it's words, and to deck it's exterior

[a] *Cura verborum derogat affectibus fidem, & ubicunque ars oſtentatur, veritas abeſſe videtur.* Quint. l. 10. c. 4. *Non ad judiciorum certamen, ſed ad voluptatem aurium, ſcripſerat Iſocrates* Cic. orat.

parts,

parts, ſcarce ever ſucceed's well. Men ordinarily diſtruſt what ever appeares artificial and unnatural. The great Orator *Iſocrates* whoſe only end in writing was to delight and pleaſe, was never fit for great affaires, and he would never have ſucceeded well at the Bar, becauſe he was too polite. This was alſo the way of thoſe Sophiſters, whom *Socrates* rallies ſo pleaſantly in *Plato*'s Phædon: and *Longinus* blames the great artifice of *Hyperides*, who fill'd his diſcourſes with too many embelliſhments, and beauties. It is a very great art to know how to manage theſe ornaments and put them in their places, when occaſion directs us to make uſe of them. When the artifice of Eloquence is too apparent, all the effects it produces are againſt it ſelf: * as ſoon as ever it appear's it becomes ſuſpected, and men look upon it as a trap which is laid to ſurprize and

* *Quæ apparent retia, vitat avis.* Ovid.

catch;

catch: beſides, that which ſtrikes the mind and ſenſes with too great a luſtre and force, wearies it, and becomes intolerable. In ſhort, the ſubjects and matters of diſcourſe ought to have within themſelves a great bottom, as it were, & ſtock of beauty, that they may be able to ſupport, and bear thoſe great ornaments which become ridiculous in mean ſubjects; for there is nothing more contrary to art, than to adorn thoſe things, which do not deſerve it: and it is no ſmall part of Eloquence to underſtand well what ought, and what ought not to be neglected. Men miſtake themſelves when they labour to be too elegant, and they often find that which glitter's moſt in a diſcourſe, is commonly moſt falſe. For thoſe figures which are ſo far fetch'd, thoſe *Antitheſes* which are ſo ſubtle, and thoſe Epithites which deſign to be ſo expreſſive & taking, are not allways conformable to good ſenſe. True

Eloquence never dazel's, nor ſurpriſes, becauſe by little and little it inſinuates it ſelf into the mind. Thoſe reaſons which are moſt capable of touching us are ordinarily (as *Ariſtotle* tell's us) the moſt common ones, and that language which is moſt natural, and to which men are inclin'd by the deſire alone which they have to make themſelves underſtood, is certainly the beſt and moſt proper. Thoſe diſcourſes in which wit and flouriſhes are requir'd, ſuch as are panegyricks and funeral orations, having no real ſolidity in them, very ſeldome ſucceed well; when they are permitted to be printed, their faults are expos'd to diſcovery; wch the Authors are to be advis'd, not to conſent to: for as ſoon as ever they are ſeen as it were in cold blood, without that heat and zeal of action which does impoſe and almoſt force an approbation, they no longer make any impreſſion, but ceaſe to touch and

ſtir

ſtir up the paſſions of men. And indeed there are images in Eloquence as well as in painting, which ought always to be ſeen at a diſtance, and never to be too nearly approached.

XXII.

In Eloquence there is leſs Genius to invent things, than to range and order them: ſince the placeing them to advantage in the order they ſhould ſtand, coſt's much more trouble, then the invention of them. For every reaſonable man can think rationally, but it is not eaſy to give our conceptions that grace which renders them agreeable and makes them admired. It is in this that Eloquence conſiſts, I do not mean that Eloquence of words, which is uſually but too well underſtood, but that of things, which is ſcarce known at all, and ſeldom attain'd to; and which only can be hoped for from happy and good

good natural parts. The worth of this art cannot be underſtood better, nor be made more apparent by any thing, than by the great difference which is found in the ſame things expreſs'd divers ways. It is the graceful manner of ſpeaking what we ſay, which commonly gives all the beauty: and though tis nature which gives the aire, yet when men have it not naturally, there are means found for the acquiring and obtaining it: as that of frequent uſe of compoſing under a good maſter, or with an underſtanding friend, and a converſation with old Authors. For it is from them that the mind learns firſt to conceive aright, and then to expreſs thoſe things which it thinks and imagines in ſuch a manner, as may make them grateful to the Auditors.

XXIII.

* In the opinion of *Cicero* there is

* *Eloquentiam quæ admirationem non habet, nullam judico.* Cic. in Brut.

no

no other true Eloquence but that which cauſes admiration: and according to this great man, nothing is ſo capable of rendring it admir'd, as the repreſentations which it makes of mens manners, and reſentments wch it cauſes by thoſe diverſe paſſions it excites. Now this cannot be put in practiſe without a perfect knowledg of the heart of man, wherein lies the chief Art of an Orator. The pictures which he may make of the manners of men, will not be unlike or falſe, if he underſtand their ſource, which is the heart: and he will eaſily ſet all motions, that is, all the paſſions of the ſoul a going, by the ſame underſtanding of the heart, wch is the ſpring and fountain from whence they flow. The little care which the greateſt part of thoſe who appear in publique take, to fathome this abyſſe ſo hard to be founded, is commonly the cauſe why ſo few Orators do ſucceed well: and thoſe who

make

make it their profeſſion to be eloquent, ought ſeriouſly to think on this; for all things well conſider'd, men are no farther Eloquent then they are knowing in the heart of man, and expert in unfolding it, ſo as to expoſe it to open view.

XXIV.

*The ill education of youth which is caus'd by the extream luxury and effeminacy of the age, the too much indulgence of parents, the too little experience of maſters, and the ill reliſh of the greateſt part of thoſe with whom we converſe; this ill education, I ſay, is alſo one of the moſt certain cauſes why few orators ſucceed well, and a great obſtacle to Eloquence: for our youth is commonly led through falſe roads, through by-ways, and by an ill me-

x *Quis ignorat eloquentiam deſciviſſe à veteri gloria, non inopia hominum, ſed deſidia juventutis, parentum negligentia, & inſcitia præcipientium.* Dial. de cauſ. cor. eloq.

thod

thod, which being corrupted in its very principles, we need not wonder if it ſucceed ſo unhappily, and if the conſequences of it be ſo unfortunate.

XXV.

Not but that there are yet remaining ſome ſparks of a Genius in the Orators of this age wch deſerve applauſe and eſteem; But becauſe that Eloquence which is purely naturall never attains at perfection without the ſuccours of art: ſhe being commonly deſtitute of this help, by reaſon of the falſe principles which men take up, or by the little diligence of her profeſſours; ſhe cannot riſe ſo high, as to deſerve the generall admiration of men, by thoſe wonderfull effects which ſhe would produce in hearts if ſhe were accompliſht.

Theſe are the reflections which may be made upon the uſe of the Eloquence of theſe times conſider'd in generall: as alſo upon thoſe reaſons which

which may hinder its effects, when it takes occasion to make the power, which it hath over the hearts of men, appear; here follow those which may be made upon the use of Eloquence in particular, and which principally are of too kinds, viz. that of the Barr, and that of the Pulpit: wherein are remark'd those errors and mistakes, which may be committed in the one and the other, as also those ways which may be practis'd & kept for to proceed therein with some considerable success.

RE-

REFLECTIONS
Upon the uſe of the *ELOQUENCE* of the Bar.

ELoquence in generall may be reduced to two kinds, one of which is employd in the affaires of the ſtate, and the other in thoſe of religion: ſo that one of them is prophane, and the other ſacred. And allthough the former have a greater range then one would think, & is not confin'd to the maintaining of one ſingle cauſe, or to the defending of one law, but doth exerciſe it ſelf in the country as well as in the cabinet, preſides in ſtates, gives ſentence in councells of war, goes to the battel, and hath a greater part in the miniſtry and government of kingdomes, then the

the Miniſters of ſtates themſelves: yet becauſe it is private and ſecret in the cabinet, into which we cannot penetrate that we might know the uſe it, it being there a myſtery, and ſhews it ſelf publique only at the Barr; I ſhall confine my ſelf to conſider her, as we find her there, for to make ſome reflections upon her uſe in that place, becauſe there ſhe moſt appears. And theſe in my opinion are the reflections which may be made of her as ſhe is there found.

I.

Thoſe who plead at the Bar, ſcarce allow any other time to the ſtudy of Eloquence, than that which they employ'd therein in their firſt and youngeſt years: the ſtudies of which age, are uſually too raſh, or too confus'd, or too ſuperficial; which is the cauſe that they can never form within themſelves any Idea, wch may be in the leaſt either

either exact or rational. Beſides thoſe great advantages, which the Greeks and Romans had from the force of their Genius, as well as from the natural inclination which they had to ſpeak well, they employ'd themſelves in a continual ſtudy of Eloquence during their lives: they travail'd that they might hear and be inſtructed by thoſe Maſters who were moſt expert in that Art: they labour'd long, and took great pains, to form their minds according to thoſe rare models which they ſearch'd for in other countries, and they ſcarce ever employ'd themſelves in any thing, which had not ſome relation to Eloquence. They made the ſtudy of this the foundation of their pleaſures, their hopes, their fortune, and even of all their ambition; becauſe it was capable of raiſing them to all honours whatever. But the young men of theſe times having narrower ſouls, believe that

the reading a Romance or Comedy, is ſufficient, to make them maſters of all the Eloquence which is neceſſary to Pleading.

II.

Thoſe very Lawyers whoſe parts and diligence are great enough, have not had half the time which is requir'd for the ſtudy of Eloquence. For beſides all the ancient Roman Law, which muſt neceſſarily be underſtood, the Modern alone, together with a perfect knowledg of our own Laws and Cuſtomes, are of ſo vaſt extent, that how cloſe ſoever a man may tye himſelf thereunto, it will be impoſſible to come to an end. And beſides, they are not ſtir'd up by the ſame hopes as the Greeks and Romans were, amongſt whom Eloquence flouriſh'd ſo much, becauſe ſhe was as it were the way to come to every thing, and even to the ſoveraign power.

III.

III.

Although the greateſt perſeverance in being diligent, the greateſt obſtinacy in taking pains, ſuſtain'd even by a clear proſpect of intereſt and ambition, and all thoſe qualities which are requiſite to ſuceed well in the Eloquence of the Bar, might concur and center in an Orator: yet thoſe little formalities and critical modes of ſpeaking, unto which he muſt bring himſelf in the ſcrupulous and exact uſe of practiſe, which is very dark and obſcure in all it's parts, will be apt to make him dry, and deprive him of that ſtock which is neceſſary to the forming the Idea of ſuch a diſcourſe, as hath the joynt aſſiſtances of Art and Nature. To ſhun this fault, we muſt take care to prevent it, by an anticipated ſtudy of Eloquence, and thereby form and accuſtome our minds to think aright, before we give up our imagination

to the barbarity of the termes of Practise. How great care soever we may take herein we shall have much adoe to escape herein, so much is the mind poyson'd with this ill air, which necessity obliges us to suck in.

IV.

The Eloquence of the Bar suffer's it self to be too much enslav'd by the several humours of speech which reign in this age according to the different modes that are in fashion, which corrupt her by taking away her natural beauty, and instead thereof give her a false and affected one. It was thus that she suffer'd her self to be encumber'd some years since, by the discourses of P.R. which were much cry'd up for a while, and which seem'd to run her out of breath, by the too great length of his periods. This lasted for a while, but that being a transient mode that follow'd the fashion of the age, we have quit-

ted that to embrace a better; Yet it is true, that a * Lawyer's Eloquence demand's a large and diffusive way of expression. But a great noise, and confus'd train of words, is not at present approv'd of, men of late expecting things more real and more solid.

V.

Too great a care of going according to rule, of being very exact and nice in discourse, is sometimes dangerous, for it wearies the attention both of the speaker and the hearer: this fault is to be avoided; we ought not to tye our selves to say nothing but what is extreamly proper to the thing in hand, it is sufficient if we bear up our Character. For there is nothing more essential to an Orator than to follow the inclination of his own Genius when he speaks, without con-

* *Subsellia grandiorem & pleniorem vocem desiderant* Cic. *in* Brut. *Cum isti dicunt non modo Corona quod ipsum est miserabile, sed etiam ab advocatis relinquantur.* ibid.

straining

ſtraining himſelf to ſay every thing ſo exactly. Moreover thoſe ſcrupulous perſons who ſpeak with ſo much circumſpection, have ſeldome any great or lofty conceptions: the care which they take to ſpeak things with ſuch extream exactneſs, drawing dry, as it were, their wit and fancy, and leaving them deſtitute of thoſe high thoughts and ſentiments which only can affect the heart. Nay even by this means, they expoſe our Language, by conſtraining her by too great a ſubjection to looſe her force and copiouſneſs, whilſt they would preſerve unto her her ſweetneſs and Elegancy.

VI.

There is alſo another extremity to be avoided, which is too great negligence not only in adorning our words, but alſo in ranging and ordering of things. Thoſe who have got to themſelves a great reputation

ration, and who by a long use are accustom'd to the Bar, are subject to this fault; which ordinarily happens unto them after they have pleaded many years, and are got into great practice: for then they think of nothing but monies and profit: they quit all the ornaments of Eloquence, because they have no time to think of them; and they become negligent, because now they have got more employment, and so the care of interest sway's more with them, than that of glory and ambition.

VII.

And yet there are some occasions in which negligence is pardonable, and where the heat of irregular discourse, joyn'd with the impetuousness of the speaker, succeeds sometimes better, than the most careful choice of words, and all the ornaments of Art. The difficulty ly's in well distinguishing and understanding

ſtanding theſe occaſions; for thoſe who can do ſo, will eaſily conquer all thoſe ſcruples wch may ariſe from paſſing over certain parts of diſcourſe wch regularly ought not to be neglected.

VIII.

There are yet certain ways of proceeding which belong only to the Bar, and yet which are comprehended but by few Orators, becauſe they are not to be diſcover'd by any but clear-ſighted witts, who ſearch out the fountains of knowledge, and with a profound meditation ſtudy thoſe great patterns of Eloquence, which we find amongſt the Ancients. Theſe are extraordinary ſtroakes of Art, which ſurpriſe the Judges, and which produce in their minds ſuddain and unexpected effects; like to that which *Cicero* commend's ſo much of a Perſon, call'd *Canus Ruſius*, who being accus'd by *Siſenna* with ſufficient vehemence, cry'd out with a vigo-

vigorous but touching voice, to his Judges, * *Circumvenior judices, nisi subvenitis, &c.* This avowing of the fear which he had of being surpriſed, and the protection which he demanded of his Judges, ſoften'd and touch'd them ſo much, that they became favourable unto him. There are an infinite number of ſuch like paſſages to be met with in *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero*, wch thoſe who are clear-ſighted know wery well how to find out. But we ought to obſerve, that it is neither the luſtre of wit, nor the noiſe of words, which produce theſe great effects. Theſe are certain ſlights of Eloquence, which are not ſo much found in the words as in the things themſelves, whoſe beauty cannot be explain'd, nor any certain rules given for the attaining them, becauſe they are inexplicable; yet men of good ſenſe, and of an uncorrupted taſt, apprehend & know them without miſtaking. Upon great ſubjects we muſt

* Cic. in Brut. make

make use of stroakes in Eloquence, like to the master-peice of that Painter, who that he might express the greif and sadness of *Agamemnon*, when his Daughter was to be sacrific'd, cover'd and vail'd his head, despairing by his Art to reach the lively expression of a Father's grief, after having represented that of his friends in so high a manner. They are such expressions as these which *Cicero* demand's in causes of importance: * *significatio sæpe major erit, quàm oratio.* These passages ought to be fitted by a good management of tender and passionate expressions, & by the most elaborate draughts of Art, that they may have the desir'd success.

IX.

* There is nothing which hath so great power over the mind of the

* Cic. *in* Brut. *Melior moderatio & nonnunquam etiam patientia. Bonus altercator vitio iracundiæ caret.* Quintil. l. 6. c. 4.

Judge,

Judge, as the opinion in general which they have of the Probity, and principally of the moderation of the Advocate, in those affairs which thwart his own or his Clients interest. The business becomes suspected as soon as men begin to urge it with too much passion and violence. Anger spoils all, even when men are in the right, and men beleive a cause ceases to be just, as soon as ever they see it manag'd with passion. So that as moderation is that of all the virtues wch can best regulate our outward deportment, so it is also that with which men are most affected, for that it shews best and strikes deepest; Whereas those Lawyers who rail against their adversaries, are only pitied by their Auditors. They must also have an ill opinion of the Judges, to beleive them apt to be pleas'd with their choler and peevish humour.

Nothing

X.

* Nothing more ſpoiles the Eloquence of the Bar, than that heap of Common-Places with which their pleadings are loaded, and with which they ſwell up thoſe Prologues to diſcourſe, which have no proportion at all to it's other parts, & wch only ſerve to weary the patience of the Judges, & to make them diſtaſt thoſe things wch otherwiſe might be very good. Young men moſt commonly are ſubject to this fault, they grope as it were and go about, becauſe on a ſuddain they have not wit enough to enter into the buſineſs. He would do them good ſervice, who could make them reſolve to quit theſe inconvenient Attendants upon diſcourſe, which are ſo contray to reaſon, and ſo odious, & ſo inſupportable to thoſe that have any. As ſoon as ever a diſcourſe begins to lengthen it ſelf by theſe childiſh amplifications, it

* *Loci inanes nec erudita civitate tolerabiles*, Cic.

becomes

becomes weak and languiſhing, it cauſes the Judges to gape and yawn, and makes them ſleepy.

XI.

It is alſo the humor of a young man to aime at elegancy and wit in whatever he ſays; and yet true Eloquence does not ſeek for this vain luſtre, which is only fit to dazle mens underſtandings: men of good ſenſe ought to endeavour to affect the heart: becauſe he who would perſwade the mind, muſt make uſe of that way. Thoſe always miſtake, who deſigne to be too taking & to pleaſe too much. That Lawyer who reckon'd more upon a paſſage of *Seneca*, and built his hopes of ſucceeding well rather upon that, than upon ſound reaſon, was very much deceiv'd: for glittering expreſſions have not force enough to perſwade, and all the good they can do is, to awaken the attention of the Judges when it is wearied.

XII.

XII.

Men take little or no care of their exterior behaviour, that they may ſhape it by action, which *Cicero* call's the Eloquence of the body, and whoſe whole perfection conſiſts in geſture, and pronunciation; becauſe the neceſſity and importance of this part is not enough underſtood, of which *Quintilian* alone hath given us precepts, whereas *Ariſtotle* and *Cicero* omitted to do ſo. They both believ'd that this was a gift of Nature, which could not be reduc'd into Art or method, and ſo contented themſelves with a bare repreſenting the importance of it in diverſe places of their works. But pronunciation is ſo important a part of Eloquence, that it cannot be neglected without renouncing the moſt ſplendid and moſt powerful part of her. It is *ſhe* who raign's in, and who is the ſoule

of

of a diſcourſe, and which makes up the greateſt part of it's force and beauty. The great talent of *Hortenſius*, whoſe name was as famous as that of *Cicero*, conſiſted only in his great, and natural inclination to, and in his free, unaffected, and eaſy way of action: he was ſo much admir'd for his pathetick and ardent manner of ſpeaking things, that *Roſcius* and *Eſope*, who were the moſt famous Comedians of that time, went to heare him when ever he ſpoke in publique, that from his mouth they might learn their trade. Since then thoſe of the Bar are ſo careleſs in their actions and behaviour, we muſt not wonder if we find now adayes ſo few marks of that Eloquence, which formerly produc'd ſo marvelous effects in the minds of men, when *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero* ſpake, who by their ardour and vehemency endeavor'd to expreſs in themſelves, thoſe very paſſions which they deſign'd

ſign'd to ſtir up in the minds of their Auditours. It is true we have ſeen a very famous Pleader, who gave great weight to all his reaſons by that heat and force with which he fortifi'd and animated his diſcourſe: yet after all this, his heat and zeal was ſo ill manag'd, that whatever he ſaid loſt it's comelineſs, by the too great deſire he had of being paſſionate: as ſoon as ever this fire was got up into his head, he ceas'd from being diſtinctly heard, or underſtood: becauſe his pronunciation became confus'd and diſorder'd by the too great activity and violence of his paſſion. On the contrary ſide there are others who are too cold, and who in affaires of great importance have too little of that which is neceſſary to warme the minds of the judges, who in matters of great moment ſuffer not themſelves to be touch'd by any other arguments, but thoſe which move very much. Wee may

ſay

ſay to theſe feeble Declamers, that which *Cicero* ſay'd againſt *Calidius*, who ſpoke things very charming and convincing with too mild and too unconcern'd a motion. *An iſta ſi vera eſſent, ſic à te dicerentur?* Almoſt all thoſe who plead in Courts, are us'd to add to that ill pronunciation which they learn at ſchoole, an odd ungrateful tone, which they call, the way of ſpeaking at the Barr; as alſo they lay ſuch a force and accent upon the laſt ſyllable but one in words, as is good for nothing, but to rock the judges and make them drowne.

XIII.

Thoſe matters which are the conſtant ſubjects of all cauſes at the Bar, being at preſent of no ſublime nature nor great importance, cannot bring thoſe advantages to Eloquence, which ſhe find's in thoſe more rich and noble ſubjects which wee meet with in antiquity. Such as are Delibe-

rations and Debates, about war or peace; considerations concerning the good of the state and the interrst of the Publique; Accusations and Defences of Princes and Kings, and all other weighty businesses of which Orators treat with so much splendor & Elegancy. Those affaires which are at present discours'd of at the Bar, are often so inconsiderable, that they are by no means capable of furnishing Eloquence with that matter which should serve as a foundation, to stir up those great passions by which formerly she triumph'd over the hearts of men. And this was one of the reasons which *Messala* in the dialogue concerning the causes of corrupted Eloquence makes use of, to shew the advantages the ancient Orators had over those of his time. And indeed narrow and small subjects of discourse make little Orators, and the spirit of him who speakes in publique, is rais'd by the worth and loftiness

loftineſs of that about which he treats.

XIIII.

There is an Eloquence of pure Authority much us'd at the Barr, & although it be neither exciting nor paſſionate, but proceeds with a cold and ſerious way of delivering it ſelf, yet even from this gravity it hath all that worth and power, which is requiſite to imprint reſpect and veneration. As ſoon as ſhe open's her mouth men liſten as attentively unto her, as to an Oracle, becauſe they are prepoſſeſſed in her favor by the ſplendor of her appearance. She makes her impreſſions without any agitations or heat, and employ's nothing but Authority. This is alſo the Eloquence of magiſtrates & judges, and of thoſe who ſit in the firſt places in publique aſſemblies. All who make ſpeeches to Princes and great Lords, ought to tie themſelves to this calm and quiet ſort of Eloquence,

which ſpeakes without any trouble or diſorder, that it may keep up its gravity: for whatever it delivers ought to be ſubmiſſive & reſpective, & it muſt order all its motions according to the rank and quality of thoſe to whom it ſpeaks; that it may treat them with more or leſs reſpect according to the degree of their merit.

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REFLECTIONS upon the *ELOQUENCE* of the Pulpit.

TIS a matter which may very well deſerve our Wonder, that of thoſe who apply themſelves to the ſtudy of Preaching, ſo few meet with ſucceſſe, conſidering the great advantages they have above all others who make it their profeſſion to ſpeak in publick. The Eloquence of the Barr can furniſh its Orators with no ſuch important ſubjects for their diſcourſes, ſuch excellent matter for their Expreſſions, ſuch powerfull motives to affect the mind, as that of the Pulpit can. The ſecret ſprings, by which this Eloquence excites the affections are ſo ſtrong; all its Rhe-

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topicall ſchemes, (being ſanctified as it were in the mouth of the Preacher, by his commerce with the holy Spirit) ſo bright and vigorous; the myſteries it unfolds ſo ſublime; the Authority it derives from the dignity of its character ſo great, that if any Eloquence can challenge a ſoveraignty over the minds of men, from the power it hath to move the affections, and an independence which is natural to it, it can be no other but this of the Pulpit. Whence is it then there are ſo few good Preachers to be found? The fault cannot lie in the Audience, their minds being wrought by faith to a perfect ſubmiſſion unto the Doctrines they ſhall receive. The ſight of the holy Altar begets in them a veneration for the diſcourſes they heare; from the principles of their Religion they are already perſwaded, that what ever the Preacher delivers is conſonant to truth. In fine ſince he that ſpeaks

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is an Embaſſadour from heaven, and his words no other then the words of God himſelf, who promiſes eternall rewards to ſuch as beleive, and threatens to inflict on thoſe who beleive not everlaſting puniſhments, it can onely be the fault of the Preacher himſelf, if he falls ſhort of the ſucceſſe he deſires. Wherefore ſince in this of all other Profeſſions, there are perhaps the feweſt who attaine their End, it will not be amiſſe, (it being a matter of ſuch importance) to enquire into the Reaſons of this miſcarriage, that ſome Remedy may be found for it; and this is that which gave the occaſion to theſe following Reflexions.

I.

We ſeldome ſeriouſly reflect on that temper and diſpoſition of mind, wch the holineſs of this Profeſſion, & dignity of ſo Sacred a Function require. Beſides the extraordinary pains & long ſtudy, by which the Preacher

muſt

must furnish himself with such great images as are necessary to form the Character of this Eloquence, he must accustome himself to frequent retirements, that by solitude his heart may be the better perpared for the reception of the holy spirit, whose Interpreter he ought to be. [1] From that spirit he must first derive a most immediate mission by the Principles of a vertuous life, that he may afterwards be dispos'd to receive the same from those who have authority in the Church, and to whome God has intrusted that power, that they may communicate it to others. And therefore he ought to be carefull not to relye too much on his own parts and naturall abilities, without imploring first, for the discharge of so holy a function, the assistance of heaven by the frequent use of meditation and prayer. Without this di-

[1] *Quomodo prædicabunt nisi mittantur? Rom.* 12.

vine

vine assistance tis impossible to penetrate so far into the truths of the Gospell, as to be able to instruct & illuminate others. But are these things done? Are they so much as thought on? What studies doe wee undergoe, what preparations doe wee make in private to acquire this disposition of mind? Doe wee not see every day some young raw Preacher, without any stock of knowledge or vertue mount the Pulpit as a Comedian doth the stage, to play his part there? Billets are dispatch'd away to invite his friends, a great assembly of his relations and other judicious persons is convened to encourage the young Declamer; who when he has pronounced two or three ill digested periods without stumbling, and has had the confidence to deliver that, which perhaps he never had the boldness to invent, out of civility he must be admir'd and complemented for his great performances: and yet

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after all, this whifling Orator is pitied by ſuch as are not prepoſſes'd, even then when he hug'd himſelf for his ſucceſſe, and thought he came off with incredible applauſe. He entertaines a falſe Idea of this holy profeſſion, that thinks he can ſo eaſily ſet up for a Preacher. Certainly there are other qualifications required to brandiſh with ſucceſſe the ſword of the ſpirit before the eyes of impenitent ſinners; to reduce the libertines of the age to ſubmit their necks to the holy yoake of the Goſpell; to awe their minds with the terrours of the laſt judgment, by a lively repreſentation of the paines of Hell and everlaſting burnings; and in ſhort to keep up with ſome kind of dignity the greatneſs and Majeſty of thoſe ſubjects which our Religion profeſſes to treat of. 'Twas without queſtion for this reaſon, that two of our Lords Diſciples were call'd the ſonns of

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Thunder, becauſe the word of God, which they powerfully preached, was as bright and terrible in their mouths, as thunder when it breakes through the aire. He that would have a bleſſing wait on his endeavours, muſt have another call then that of the young declamer, who uſually preacht only to refreſh his ſpirits: or his, who performed that exerciſe by the advice of his phyſitian, to take down the weight of fleſh that did ſomewhat incommode him. Theſe are ſuch horrid profanations, as would hardly meet with beleif, if we had not freſh examples of them in our memory.

II.

Men doe not ſeriouſly enough conſider, that when they preach they have their commiſſion from heaven; which is one reaſon that the Word of God looſes the weight & authority it ſhould carry along with it. The greateſt part of our Preachers

ſtamp

ſtamp their compoſitions from the mint of their own brain; they preach themſelves, and diſcard as it were the ſpirit of God, to keep the place entire for their owne. The Prophets, who were the Preachers of the ancient law, obſerved another method; they never ſpeak to the people as private Perſons, but as the [a] Embaſſadours of God; and the Grandure of their maſter, by whom they were employed, begat that reſpect in their Auditors with wch they were received. I have ſeen an Embaſſador of a forraign Prince, who though he had no great talent of Eloquence; yet when he deliver'd any thing on the behalf of his Maſter, he back'd his words with authority, had full Audience, and effected his buſines by the addreſs he had to make himſelf conſiderable; becauſe he had the art to repreſent his Maſters perſon;

[a] *Pro Chriſto legatione fungimur, tanquam Deo adhortante per nos.* 2. *Cor.* 5.

and

and lay aside his owne. What weight and power might wee not add to the word of God, if wee understood well to handle it as such, and not as the issue and invention of a humane brain? This word should be preach'd by us as it was by St. Paul, *per arma justitiæ, in verbo veritatis, in virtute Dei. Cor.* 2.

III.

As Sacred Eloquence builds on a plat-forme infinitely more large then that on which the humane is rais'd, proposing an eternall Kingdome to our hopes, endless torments to our feares, and making the holines of our Mysteries, the purity of our Morals, the Majesty of that God we adore, of which we discover such excellent Ideas in the Holy Scriptures, and all the dreadfull truths which make our Religion so august, the ordinary subjects of its discourses; so to effect its glorious designes, it requires more eminent naturall

parts

parts, and a more refined Genius then the pagan Eloquence did. There must be a great mine, an inaffected gravity, worth to be read in the face, devotion in the eyes, heat and vigour in the pronunciation, a freedome in every action, and in fine the air of a Prophet. But a confluence of all these naturall qualifications is so rare, that I have hardly known above one person in our age who has bin perfectly qualified in all these respects for a Preacher. Besides a lively fancy, and clear wit, of which he was master in a high degree, which inabled him to express himself with the greatest facility imaginable, he had the best Pronunciation in the world. He might be said to be an Orator in his face, voice, gesture and behaviour. He did with his eyes what he would; he had a perfect command of his voice, he gave such an aire to his look, such a grace to his actions, such an agreablenes to his discourse, as he himself

himself pleas'd. Never had any Orator such a taking way as he had: and as he was master of what he said, and of the manner of expressing himself, he made on the minds of his audience what impressions he would. The biggest places were too little to contain the number of his followers, and the greatest churches had scaffolds erected in them, when he was to preach. And though the great facility he had of expressing himself made him usually take lesse paines in his preparation, yet he set off that, which was flattest in his discourse, so well by his action, that he imposed on his audience by his delivery. The most ordinary things which he said were heard with the same approbation as the learned harangues of the most Eloquent Preachers. And indeed he had bin the most accomplished Orator in the world, if his judgment and his learning had bin answerable to his other talents; and he had not bin too

excessive

excessive in his action, which expressed too much, and had not that gravity which the holines of the Pulpit requires.

IV.

These naturall abilities are sometimes so dazling, that they steale as it were from the word of God that esteem and veneration wee ought to have for it. Men are often followed and admired, not because their Doctrines are more divine, but because they speake eloquently, preach novelties, have some character of worth and repute, or at least are fam'd for some extrordinary qualification. Thus the Jewes went to heare the prophet *Ezechiel*, because he was an Eloquent Preacher, & St. *Augustine* before his conversion to heare St. *Ambrose*, because his discourses were agreable. But this arising from a disorder of the sensual appetite, the Preacher ought to avoid the feeding of mens curiosity; which he

may

may eaſily do, by chuſing rather to edify then to pleaſe: and this he is likelieſt to effect, who delivers good matter, and does it with concernment.

V.

Not that all who enter into holy Orders, ſhould be maſters of thoſe great naturall parts, we have bin ſpeaking of. Tis fit there ſhould be in the Church, men of a different capacity, the better to accommodate them ſelves to that of their audience which is ſo various. Tis enough for him who preaches to the common people, to be acquainted wth the fundamentals of Chriſtianity, & to be able to expound them well. An indifferent Preacher may be qualify'd wel enough to keep up religion, & make it ſubſiſt in a Country village, notwithſtanding the ignorance and ſtupidity that reign there: becauſe how mean ſo ever his parts are, he may always be in a condition to in-

ſtruct, provided he has a tolerable pronunciation: for though to move the minde there is required a good naturall Genius, yet there are many who by making a great noiſe, and affecting a vehement way of expreſſion, work the ſame effects on the minds of the vulgar, as drumms and trumpets do on ſouldiers in a Battle: the noiſe ſtuns and confounds them, and maks them ruſh into the midſt of ſmoak and flame, without conſidering whether they goe. Tis not reaſon that moves the minds of the people, it being a thing they cannot comprehend, but the emotion & heat wch which the preacher ſpeaks, the noiſe that is heard wch is wont to make the impreſſion. The things themſelves do not affect ſo much as the manner of expreſſing them; becauſe that onely is ſenſible, whilſt the things are not ſo. And therefore the common people judge of the argumentsin a diſcourſe by the tone of the voice with which

wch they are delivered. They believe him that has the beſt lungs and ſpeaks loudeſt, and ſuffer themſelves to be perſwaded by the boldnes and confidence of the Preacher; the ſoule being uſually moved by that which moſt affects the ſenſe. But ſuch popular preachers muſt be informed, that they become ridiculous, as ſoon as they offer at wit, and thinke to pleaſe rather then inſtruct. To preach well before a vulgar audience, tis enough to propoſe after a plain and familiar way the fundamentall truths of our religion, and the holineſs of its moralls, without affecting ſuch new modes, as ſerve onely to perplex and confound both the Preacher and his hearers too.

VI.

The greateſt part of thoſe who make it their profeſſion to preach, are uſually very ignorant, becauſe they meddle too much with the affaires of the world, and allot the leaſt

part of their time to their private ſtudies. This layes on them a neceſſity of conſtant tranſcribing, to furniſh themſelves with matter for their diſcourſes; which they cannot fetch from the original fountains, as being altogether unacquainted with them. And hence it is they often make uſe of weak arguments to enforce the practice of vertue, becauſe they have neither abilities to find good ones, nor art enough, if they chance to light on any, to make them underſtood. He that borrows too much from another, is uſually injurious to himſelf; for he ſuppreſſes thoſe parts he has, whilſt he endeavours to acquire thoſe which he has not: from whence ariſe all the deformities that are frequent with ſuch as quit their owne naturall abilities to ſerve themſelves with another man's; and this makes ſo many bad preachers, becauſe they miſapply what they ſteale. Wee ought not to make uſe of

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the designs and conceptions of another, unlesse wee are able so to transform them, as so make them perfectly our own.

VII.

The Eloquence of the pulpit cannot become perfect but by a great stock of solid Learning, which such onely are masters of, who have formerly made it their study to enrich their minds with all sorts of knowledg necessary for the right handling of the Word of God. Of these school-Divinity is the most important, without which a Preacher is uncapable of resolving with authority any question that offers it self in his discourses. Tis a very great failure in one that speakes in public, not to be able to tell precisely what is matter of faith, and what is not; for he is unresolv'd and at a losse, when he ought to determine. But withall wee are to consider, that as nothing is more solid and more pleasing in the Eloquence

quence of the Pulpit; then ſchool-Divinity when tis fitly made uſe of, it being the very ſcience of our Religion, ſo on the other ſide nothing can be more flat and diſagreable, when tis not handled with the ability and ſufficiency it requires.

VIII.

In the mean time a too frequent converſe with the ſchool-divines, may be more prejudicial then advantagious to ſuch as are not skilful enough to make uſe of them with precaution. For the aire of Eloquence is directly contrary to that of the School; and I am perſwaded that the reading of *Thomas Aquinas*, as ſolid and methodical as he is, has made more bad Preachers than good ones, becauſe he writ in an Age whoſe taſt was miſerably corrupted. His barren and harſh way of expreſſing himſelf is as much oppoſed to Eloquence, as his matter is proper for it. Not but that the plaineſt & moſt familiar ſtyle, is beſt

beſt to inſtruct, but if great care be not taken, 'twill ſoon become contrary to that wee ought to make uſe of when wee ſpeake in public. The other Divines that have writ ſince, and in imitation of him compoſed a method for the Schooles, are equally dangerous in reference to the Eloquence of the Pulpit; ſhe ſoon becomes dry and inſipid by too much ſubtilty of ratiocination: which indeed may adde ſtrength and vigour to a diſcourſe, but deprives it of all its grace and elegancy. I doe not deny, but that Logic, which teaches the art of conceiving aright, is abſolutely neceſſary to Eloquence, without which ſhe is onely a pratler, makes a noiſe and ſays nothing; but theſe aſſiſtances ought not to be employ'd in that barren manner, as uſually they are; the ornaments of Eloquence muſt be intermixed wth them, if we intend to adde beauty and agreablenes to a diſcourſe.

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IX.

The ſame Obſervation is to be made on the ſtudy of the Latine Fathers, who are as contrary to Eloquence as the ſchool-Divines, by reaſon of the low eſtate to which the Art of ſpeaking was reduced in the times in wch they lived. Ther's no body but knows to what extremity that which wee call good ſenſe and ſolid learning was brought, when the *Goths* over-ran Italy. All the Fathers from the firſt Ages down to St. *Bernard* have writ after this harſh and barren manner, if we except a ſmall number, who by preſerving ſome tincture of Antiquity, have not ſuffer'd themſelves to be ſpoiled by the corrupted palate of the Age, as *Minutius Felix*, *Salvian*, *Arnobius*, St. *Jerome*, to whom we may add in ſome paſſages in their works, St. *Ambroſe* and St. *Auguſtine*. The Greek Fathers are more eloquent then the Latine, although the ordering their deſignes

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and ſubjects on which they diſcourſe, are uſually plain, uneven, and very little conformable to the Rules of Art, they having embraced a naturall and eaſy aire of Eloquence, by abandoning themſelves too much to their own Genius; as wee may remarke in St. *Baſil* and St. *Chryſoſtome*; for *Gregory Nazianzen* is more polite, and employs more of Art. But whilſt I repreſent to Preachers the Danger to which the reading of the Latine Fathers may expoſe their Eloquence, to the end that they may be carefull not to ſpoile their ſtyle, I doe not deſigne to cry downe all commerce with them; which is not onely uſefull, but abſolutely neceſſary for the Preacher to fill his mind with the Ideas of piety, and greatneſs of our religion, which are to be met with every where in their workes. From thence as the pureſt ſources of morality, he ought to derive all his know-

ledge.

ledge. The Fathers are the natural Interpreters of the Gospel, and the Church has honoured them with that sacred name, because they have left their writings as a patrimony and inheritance to all faithfull men as their legitimate Children.

X.

Tis not enough for a Preacher to improve himself by a long study of Schcol-Divinity, and a frequent commerce with the Fathers, whose writings he must read methodically, but he must also thinke of forming a Rhetoric for the Pulpit; of which no Character can be found among the Ancients, who had no Idea of it, nor amongst the Moderns, who have onely transcribed the Ancients. The majesty of our Religion, the holines of it's Law's, the purity of it's moralls, the sublimity of it's mysteries, and the importance of all it's subjects should give the sacred Eloquence such a height, as cannot be reacht

reacht and kept up by the weaknes of a meer humane Understanding. Twere in vain to search for it in the Rhetoric of *Aristole*, amongst the Ideas of *Hermogenes*, and the institutions of *Quintilian*. The loftiest kind of all those which *Longinus* hath formed out of the expressions of the Ancients, is mean and humble in comparison of that which the Preacher ought to acquire, to maintain the dignity of his character. That great aire of Eloquence, which the grandure of Christianity and the incomprehensibility of our Faith require, is no where to be met with but amongst those Ideas with which the Holy Scripture furnishes such as are skillfull enough to penetrate the depths thereof. From these pure and eternal fountains those lofty expressions flow, of which the holy spirit is the author; and there onely those illustrious images and highest flights are to be found, that make the Essen-

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tiall Character of the Eloquence of the Pulpit. The holy prophets muſt be his conſtant leſſon, and to digeſt them by frequent meditation his continuall care, who would clothe his words with power, and appear terrible to his audience; which ought to be the deſigne of the beſt preachers, to the end that they may ſtartle the ſecure ſinner, and by darting terrour into his ſoule, rouſe him from that Lethargy into which by the luxury & effeminacy of the age he is unhappily fallen. I may adde, that the holy Scriptures ſo abound with all the richeſt ornaments which ſet off the beauty of Eloquence, that in them all it's ſeverall kinds may eaſily be found. *Eſaiah* is lofty, *Jeremiah* Pathetic, *Ezekiel* terrible, *Daniel* Tender, & all the reſt have ſome peculiar height, and have writ with ſuch force as never any profane O-

x *Naturaliter plus valet apud plurimos malorum timor quam ſpes bonorum. Fab. lib.* 3. c. 8.

rator

rator did. What book of Morality containes so much of good sense and right reason, as the books of *Salomon*? Never was History writ in a more easy and sublime style together, and withall more perfect then that of *Moses*, out of which *Longinus* cites but two words, to set downe the greatest Idea of the loftiest kind of Eloquence, of which all Pagan Authors fall extreamly short. Nothing was ever more soft and delicate, fitter to inflame the mind with devotion & piety, then the Psalms of *David*. The most cleer-sighted *Politicians* of the world, never pierced farther then the Author of the book of *Wisdome* and the *Proverbs*? To be short never was any thing by the utmost of humane capacity so far penetrated and dived into, as the adorable mysteries of grace and predestination, which St. *Paul* has explain'd in his Epistles. And to speake a word

Γενέσθω φῶς καὶ ἐγένετο. c. 1. v. 8.

con-

concerning the new Teſtament, which is the Fundamental Book of our Religion, and in reſpect of which all the writings of the Prophets are but a kind of Preface and Introduction; what can be more expreſſive and great, then that which Jeſus Chriſt himſelf has ſaid in two words, [a] *Verba que locutus ſum vobis ſpiritus & vita ſunt*? Other books contain nothing but words, this nothing but things. And as tis the Character of a mans ſpirit, to ſpeake much and expreſſe little, ſo tis the Character of the ſpirit of God, to ſpeake little and expreſſe much. Indeed the holy ſcripture is uſed to conceale extraordinary ſenſe under a plain expreſſion, which uſually comprehends in it more then wee eaſily conceive. What can be more plain and ſhort then theſe words, [b] *Verbum caro factum eſt—Et* [c] *crucifixerunt eum*? And yet how many volumes have bin writ

[a] John. 6. [b] John. 1. [c] John. 19.

to

to explain theſe two words, and how many more are like to be made? What clearnes of Underſtanding ought wee to have to diſcover the depth of theſe Myſteries? Wee ſtop nevertheles at the ſuperficies of the words, and ſinke not into them by a conſtant meditation. What Preacher is there at this time quick ſighted enough to penetrate into the cloudy myſteries and the holy obſcurities of the ſacred Text, and diſcover all the ſenſes which are lockt up there? [a] 'Tis the unhappines of our Age that ſo few are found able to breake the ſacred bread of Gods word, which ſhould be the dayly food of Chriſtians; that is, Preachers enlightned ſo as to expound to the people all the ſences of the Holy Scripture, and skillfull enough to make uſe of them in their Diſcourſes, as being the onely meanes of gaining ſuc-

[a] *Parvuli petierunt panem & non erat qui frangeret eis. C. 4. Lam. Jer.*

ceſſe

ceſſe in their miniſtry. Men preach their own fancies and humours, and negl ct the conceptions of the holy ſpirit. Is not this to looſe our way at the firſt ſetting out, there being no true Idea of the Chriſtian Eloquence to be found, but in the holy ſcripture, which is the fountaine and Originall of it?

XI.

Beſides a ſtock of Learning gained by a conſtant uſe of the Fathers, and a long ſtudy of School-Divinity, together with an aire of Eloquence framed after the modell of the prophets; the Preacher muſt make to himſelf a ſyſteme of Morality, whoſe principles are deriv'd from the holy Goſpell; all other being nothing elſe but meer Philoſophy and Pagan vertue. To perfect theſe Ethicks he muſt be converſant not onely with the Evangeliſts, but alſo with the Epiſtles of St. *Paul*, and make the Homilies of St. *Chryſoſtome*, wherein

wherein the duties of Morality are ſo well explained, his conſtant ſtudy. There are excellent leſſons too to be learned from St. *Auguſtine*, St. *Jerome*, St. *Gregory*, St. *Bernard*, and the other Fathers, which he muſt read with a great deal of care and attention; not as many young Preachers doe, whoſe onely deſigne is to collect ſuch witty paſſages and florid expreſſions, as many adorn and poliſh their diſcourſes, but tend not to the edification of the People, nor work in them a real and unfaigned contrition.

XII.

The true Moralls of our Religion are only to be derived from theſe pure & holy fountaines; eſpecially in this age wherein every man faſhions his Ethicks according to his owne fancy, and ſome are growne ſo extravagant, as to preach their peeviſh and melancholy humours, attended with

x *Attende tibi, & doctrinæ. Epiſt. Paul.* 1 *Tim.* 4.

ſuch ridiculous whimſies, as the ſpirit of Novelty and prejudice inſpires into their diſtempered braines, for pure and rigid morality. Have wee not lately ſeen a Divine, that being profoundly ignorant in all ſorts of Learning requiſite for one of his profeſſion, took upon him to determine every thing with the greateſt exactneſſe imaginable; and becauſe he preached with the aſſurance of a Prophet, and the confidence of a young Divine the greateſt abſurdities in the world, and in matters of morality, when the heat of his zeale had a little warmed his brain, venter'd upon any thing that was new, he was cried up and admired beyond all others of his Profeſſion: it being too much the cuſtom among us, to be affected with novelties, and run after every thing that hath but the leaſt aire of ſingularity. But if wee make a ſtrict inquiry into the lives of theſe men, that profeſſe ſo much to preach

of

of nothing but mortification, wee ſhall finde, they are not altogether ſo ſevere to themſelves as they are to others. Such was that young Doctor, who preach'd about fifteen yeares agoe in one of our greateſt Churches, and at the beginning of Lent promiſed with the tone of a ſanctified Reformer, that he would preach nothing but the ſevereſt Morals, and the ſtricteſt duties of Chriſtianity; but a while after his ſtory was ſung in the ſtreets, and he became the table talk of the whole City. He that would preach ſeverity, muſt doe it as Chriſt did, that is enforce it by his owne example. The Character of Chriſtian ſeverity, is to be kind and gentle to others, and rigid onely to our ſelves; to act otherwiſe, is onely to play the impoſtor and the Comedian, and not doe the duty of a Preacher. Wee have ſeen in this laſt Age ſuch falſe Zelots as pretended to preach more rigourous moralls

then others, whilſt they lift up impure hands to heaven, and fomented Errour on the Earth. To be ſhort, all thoſe that are exceſſive only becauſe they are ignorant, who magnifie trifles and peccadillos into deadly and enormous ſins, and take the authority to condemn a woman for wearing colour'd ribbans, or walking abroad on a holy-day; theſe Preachers I ſay diſcredit the miniſtery by the exceſſe of their ſottiſh exaggerations. They diſcourage thoſe that are vertuous by making falſe images of vice; and authorize the wickedneſs of Prophane perſons, by forming ſuch terrible Ideas of Vertue, and repreſenting her beyond compare more dreadfull and ſevere them ſhe really is.

XIII.

The ill ſucceſſe that attends moſt Preachers, is occaſioned by the little care they take to learn the Moralls of our Religion, and the ſmall abili-

abilities they have to preach them, there being nothing that affects the mind more than the portraicts that are made of them, if they are well done. In this Art many are very defective, by reaſon of a vain curioſity they have to ſtuff their diſcourſes with reaſonings and diſpute: a way they are forced to take, to avoid the difficulties they are like to meet with in making exact draughts of Manners, which indeed is a thing moſt likely to procure the Orator admiration and applauſe, but withall the moſt difficult. He that would ſucceed well therein, muſt firſt get an exact knowledge of the heart of man; he muſt be acquainted with each particular motion, to make a true draught of it; and to paint men ſo to the life, as that they may know themſelves by the pictures that are made of them. In this all ſuch are deficient, as make falſe images of their manners to whom they preach, their ſtroakes being

being too ſtrong or too weak. They do not affect, becauſe the pictures being unlike, men cannot know themſelves: and all they ſay is loſt, becauſe it cannot be rightly applyed. They preach to vertuous perſons as they do to the profane and diſſolute, and to Courtiers as to men of ſtrictneſs and ſeverity. They preach the duties of Merchants in country villages, making ſermons and harangues, where they ſhould only catechize, & give plain & eaſy inſtructions. His ſtory is well known that preached of all ſorts of ſinnes againſt the ſixth Commandement, to Recluſes that were vertuous & diſcreet. This fault moſt are obnoxious to, becauſe a faculty of diſcerning the inclinations of their audience, and a perfect knowledge of Mens manners, are talents very rare, by reaſon of the great Experience of the world requiſite to obtain them, together with the knowledge of Philoſophy and ſchool-divinity

nity, which are the first sources of this discerning faculty. Certainly there is nothing more essential to a Preacher than this; and I am perswaded that none can otherwise meet with success, then as he hath this faculty, that is, no longer than he knows the manners and hearts of men.

XIV.

The heart of man is an unfathomable abysse; what ever discoveries are made of it, there stil remain new ones to make. Nor is it sufficient for him, that would take the draught thereof, to penetrate it so far as to know it's wiles, it's deceits, it's dissimulations, it's infirmities, it's suspicions, it's distrusts, it's jealousies, it's irresolutions, it's contradictions, it's extreames, it's shifts, it's inconstancy, it's concerne for it's own interest, it's pride, it's presumption, the confus'd mixture of all it's affections, and in fine it's natural and most

moſt ſtrange inclination to malice, and hypocriſy; He muſt alſo take from it the maske of Vertue, candor, and ſincerity, which it makes uſe of to exerciſe with more artifice it's deepeſt diſſimulations: he muſt let it know that by an inexhauſtable fountain of ſelf love, againſt which Divines have declamed with ſo much heat, and by a falſe modeſty, it conceales from it's ſelf the vileneſs of it's intentions, to avoid by it's ſophiſtry the confuſion and ſhame it would otherwiſe undergoe. As it hath no vertue of its ſelf, but on the contrary all kinds of vice, it muſt be made ſenſible, that the joy wch it makes ſhew of in the exerciſe of vertue, is oftentimes but counterfeit; that it flatters it ſelf with the vain appearance of greif and ſorrow in the exerciſe of repentance: that it's faith, it's hope, it's charity, & all it's other vertues are commonly but imaginary and ſpurious ones, with which it amuſes it ſelf, having but

but a falſe ſecurity in it's confus'd deſignes and vain projects of ſalvation. To be ſhort, to lay the heart quite open, and let it ſee it's ſelf in it's proper colours, he muſt paint out it's falſe modeſties in thoſe things which it earneſtly deſires; it's artificial excuſes in thoſe that it would avoid; it's perverſe and erroneous judgments in what it eſteems; the weakneſs of it's reſolutions, and the continual ſolicitude of it's care in what it purſues. I ſhould never make an end if I would diſcover all it's Artifices, and diſplay all it's turnings. I have ſaid enough to ſhew in general the principal ſources of it's motions, which muſt be the ſubject of their continual attention, who deſire to be diſtinguiſh'd from the vulgar ſort of Preachers. For indeed the knowledge of the heart of man, whither more or leſs, is almoſt the only thing that makes the true diſtinction of the different talents of Preaching, the

kinds

kinds thereof being almoſt infinite. The little care that is uſually taken to arrive at this knowledge, is one of the ordinary cauſes that ſo ſmall a number ſucceed well. Becauſe whilſt they ſpeak things in general, and deſcend not to any particular deſcription, no body concerns himſelf with what they deliver. Tis this particular deciphering of manners, when it is natural, that crownes the Preacher with ſucceſs; the art of which being rare, the ſucceſs is ſo too.

XV.

The Eloquence of the Pulpit, as it owes the greateſt part of it's ſucceſs, to the making exact draughts of morality, ſo it is no leſs beholding for it, to the art of exciting the affections by action, and a warme behaviour. Tis not enough for a Preacher to ſpeak good things, but he muſt deliver them well and with a pathetick aire; for whatever moving matter he de-

delivers, without being affected himself, is usual taken for a meer grimace, and becomes ridiculous. I have heard a Doctor, who preach'd the duties of morality with choice & excellent words; every thing that he said was good; but he delivered it so coldly, without that action and heat that is requir'd to affect the mind, that some who were pleasant took occasion to say, he could never behave himself so calmly, without being in some manner resolv'd to be damn'd by his audience, because he seemed to be so little interested in what he said. This frozen manner of expression, and of being cold on the great subjects of the Gospel, is one main obstacle to the efficacy of God's Word, which unless it be preached with some sort of zeal and heat, cannot produce those effects it ought to do. But how few are there nowadays that can boast of their having affected the least part of their Auditors, by representing

ing to them the horrour of ſin, & the dreadful conſequences of it? Though we read of a *Jerome* of *Savonarolla* in Florence, of a *Lewis de Grenada* in Sevill, and a *Delingendes* in Paris, who have heretofore made their whole audience tremble, as ſoon as they open'd their mouthes on ſubjects of terror. Tis reported that a Capuchin, named *Philip de Narny*, Preached at Rome in the time of *Gregory* the Fifteenth, with ſuch Power, ſuch Action and Zeale, that he never appeared in publick, but he made the people, as they went out of the Church, cry out in the ſtreets, *Lord have mercy upon us.* Tis ſaid of the ſame Perſon, that having one day Preach'd before the Pope concerning the reſidence of Biſhops, he terrified ſo by the vehemency of his diſcours thirty Biſhops that heard him, that thy fled next day every one to his reſpective dioceſs. Theſe great effects are not produced but by an extra-

extraordinary talent of Pronunciation, to which alone Eloquence is oftentimes obliged for thoſe Miracles ſhe doth in the world; eſpecialy in reſpect of the common people, whoſe ſoules are too narrow to be affected with her on any other account, but as ſhe hath ſomething that ſtrikes the ſenſe, which is done only by a vehement and paſſionate Pronunciation. And this is ſo little ſtudied, becauſe it requires a care and diligence which few Perſons will undergoe; and which moſt Preachers ſcarcely ſo much as think on.

XVI.

Tis too great a truth that thoſe who apply themſelves to Divinity, ſpend not time enough in ſtudying the Art of Pronunciation, ſo as to arrive at any perfection in it. They read the Fathers, they ſtudy Rhetorick, they take pains about the Languages, and in the mean time neglect this

this art of Action, which is the only thing that can animate a diſcourſe, and give it ſuch a grace and agreableneſs as may fix the attention of the Audience; the want of which is enough to render all the other parts of Eloquence altogether uſeleſs. Not but that in this as in all other things there are extremes to be avoided; for thoſe who act a paſſion throughout their whole Diſcourſe, and leaſt they ſhould be deficient therein, are loud and thunder in the very Prefacees of their Sermons, ſpoile their Pronunciation by giving too much to their humour. Tis fit they ſhould be made ſenſible, that thoſe who deſire always to affect, are uncapable of doing it when 'tis convenient. We have heard a Preacher not long ſince, that was of this humour, who had otherwiſe met with very good ſucceſs. He was a man of excellent Parts, and had many things in his diſcourſes that were very taking; his expreſſi-

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ons were ſtrong, and his aire paſſionate; but he loſt theſe advantages by having too great a deſire of affecting, and by beings unſeaſonably loud. By this means his pronunciatiation became too vehement, his geſtures too expreſſive, and his action altogether mimicall. In ſhort his delivery was ſo much ſpoil'd by his grimaces, and the violent and forced agitations of his body, that women great with child were forbid to goe to hear him, becauſe his motions were become as it were real convulſions. This giddy headed zeal, that is blamable as ſoon as it exceeds it's bounds, is to be avoided by a Preacher; who ought well to conſider, that he affects no longer, when once he lets it appear that he deſignes to do ſo. Tis a falſe paſſion that laſts long, and that zeal becomes ſuſpected, which hath too much heat, and is too apparent.

XVII.

XVII.

Some there are that desire to please, without being solicitous whether they affect the heart or no; which is another extremity to be avoided; for he that would meet with success in Preaching, must first affect the minds of his Audience, and then please them, who go to Church (if they go as they ought to do) with a designe to be affected and wrought upon by the Preacher. Not but that many in this age have a clear judgment enough, and a right understanding of things: but by desiring to much to please, they are in danger of loosing the true fruit of their endeavours, whilst they search for nothing but the blossome. That which pleases, by opening the heart and dissipating the spirits, distracts the mind, which receives no advantage but whilst the spirits are united and recollected into

into a serious and profound attention; and so men loose that which is solid and substantial, by being too much carried away by that which is taking and agreable. Without doubt such persons as these, who desire rather to please than affect their audience, were those that have introduced into the Pulpit certain aires of Eloquence, that tast of the Court, and are taken up by such as have an ambition to be modish Preachers. We have heard not long since Persons of this kind; whose Auditors dress'd themselves to goe to Church as they did to goe to a Ball. All the Gallants of the town met there, to hear some Courtly Moralls delivered with an affected and complemental aire: but all the effect of these agreable and neat discourses, was only a distraction of the mind, than which nothing is more opposite to devotion. Woe be to these Preachers a la mode; the Evangelists and Apostles made

use of a far different method. What can be more undecent, & unbefitting a Divine, then to discourse on the severest duties of our Religion, the contempt of Christianity, the opprobriousness of the Cross, with a gay and elegant air, polite and florid expressions, and pretend to intermix these weak and mean Ornaments, with the majesty of the Mysteries of our Religion? This fault is most usual with such as Preach to Persons of Quality. They study to be taking with those whom they ought to terrify, by making them sensible, that their condition is dangerous, and essentially opposite to salvation; and that no tract or foot-step of the Gospel is to be found in the life that is led at Court. We ought indeed to pity these blind men, that are poysoned with infected air; but this should the rather excite the Preacher to speak the truth: For we learn of our Forefathers, that the Court was religious, when their

Prea-

Preachers were ſo, and embraced virtue, when propoſed by the example of their ſpiritual Guides,

XVIII.

Others there are whoſe Preaching is attended with ill ſucceſs, becauſe they have too great an eye to worldly Intereſt, and are more ſolicitous how to ſecure an eſtate, then the ſalvation of their Auditors; and ſo preach themſelves, and not Jeſus Chriſt. But theſe Perſons might remember, that the great ſucceſs the Apoſtles met with, came only, as St *Chryſoſtome* obſerves, from their diſingaging themſelves from all worldly concernes. St *Paul* converted whole Nations to the faith, becauſe he pretended to no gain and benefit from his ſermons. But ſometimes it happens, that thoſe who can raiſe themſelves above any temporal hopes, and deſpiſe the world, are not able to conquer the vanity of being concern'd for their repu-

reputation. Tis hard for them not to preach themselves in preaching the Gospel; and having renounced the world, they cannot part with the satisfaction of being admir'd. The Preacher, that he may be cured of this weakness, should seriously consider, that although all the applauses he hath gain'd were real and sincere, which they very seldom are, yet after all he hath preached but indifferently, if he leaves his audience the liberty of saying he hath done well: for he hath only pleas'd, but not converted. The greatest praise that can be given a Preacher, is the silence of his Auditors, who after sermon rise pensively from their seats, and goe out of the Church without speaking a word; This is a signe they are touched, and reflect on what they have heard; which is also consonant to an expression of the great *Symmachus* in one of his Epistles to the Emperours, *Theodosius* and *Arcadius*,

Excess

Excess of * *Admiration and astonishment, permitted not the Auditors to give the deserv'd applause.* Thus they were affected that heard a late Preacher, who delivered the dreadfull terrours of Religion after so powerful and pathetick a manner, that when his Auditors went from sermon, their astonishment and compunction of heart struck into them such a silence, as spake very much more then words could do. I cannot forget here an adventure I met with lately, going to hear a sermon one day in Lent at a great Church. The Preacher then discoursed concerning sufferings and afflictions with a gay and affected aire: whilst the Ladies from time to time lifted up their eyes to heaven, and said, *This is fine! He is an admirable Preacher!* I was very much troubled to hear one speake so pleasantly on a subject,

* *Magnitudo stuporis locum plausibus non reliquit.* lib. 10. Epist. 22.

which

which ſhould have bin delivered with terrour, and to deſigne to be taking, when he ought to have worked in his audience a real ſorrow and unfaigned contrition. There is another vanity, more ſottiſh then this, of which many who have the reputation of being religious and powerful Preachers are often guilty; and that is to aſcribe to themſelves the glory of having touched their audience, then which nothing can be more puerile. Tis fit they ſhould be undeceived, and made ſenſible that in all this they have done nothing but what the impreſſion of the voice, and the exterior ſound of words is able to produce; Our Religion teaches us, that tis only the holy ſpirit that doth the reſt.

XIX.

Sometimes Preachers are unſucceſsful by truſting too much to their own abilities, without imploring the aſſiſtance

ſtance of heaven for the diſcharge of ſo holy a Profeſſion; and by that meanes are neceſſitated to joyn the weakneſs of their conceptions with the holineſs of our Myſteries. Such a one was that impertinent Preacher, who having one day preached but pitifully before Cardinal *Richelieu*, made him a complement after ſermon, & told him he had bin forc'd to truſt to the aſſiſtance of the ſpirit, having not had time enough to prepare himſelf, but that another time he would take more pains, and hoped to pleaſe him better. There are ſome things ſo great and lofty in our Religion, that the very propoſing them plainly and without art to the people, would gain all the glory that can be reap'd from Eloquence, if it were honeſt to preach for reputation. For he uſually ſpeakes well, and is allways Eloquent, who delivers good matter, ſpeaks reaſon, and does it upon preparation.

XX.

They handle not the Word of God aright, who enlarge themſelves on poor and trifling ſubjects, when there are ſo many noble and important themes in our Religion to be diſcours'd on: as thoſe mean Preachers doe, that declame with ſo much zeale againſt black patches, ribbons, laces, and other vanites of Women. Men of parts endeavour firſt to awe the minds of the audience with the terrour of divine judgments, then which nothing is more effectual to deſtroy luxury, and introduce a modeſty in apparrell. Tis this muſt be the principall deſigne of a Preacher; who onely trifles, if he makes uſe of any other method. And indeed, amidſt ſuch plenty of great and weighty matters, with which a Chriſtan may furniſh himſelf out of the holy Goſpell, tis an argument of a mean and ſordid ſpirit to make choiſe of triviall and

petty ſubjects. I know not by what misfortune it is, that Chriſtian Preachers diſcourſe ſometimes ſo meanly on great and important arguments, when the Pagan Orators became lofty & ſublime on matters of no moment. I am aſhamed when I read the Oration of *Eſchines* againſt *Cteſiphon*, where the Orator on a trifling occaſion employs with ſo much art the utmoſt power of Pagan Eloquence. *Wee are come*, ſaith he, *to the Sacred myſteries; the Victims are laid on the Altars, the ſacrifice is ready, and you are prepared to beg of the Gods thoſe things which are neceſſary for the Preſervation of the State; but conſider firſt with what voice, with what mind, with what aſſurance can you preſent your vowes to heaven, if you let the impieties of thoſe who have profan'd our holy myſteries goe unpuniſhed?* See here heat and vigor, in compariſon of the faint and weak expreſſions of Chriſtian Preachers; who inſtead of being elevated

ted by the majesty and grandure of our religion, stop at matters of no importance, as being unable to raise themselves unto such as are of moment. The essentiall character of the pulpit is the grave and serious kind of Eloquence, which can endure nothing that's mean, cold, triviall, and puerile. To acquire this, wee are onely to imitate the Apostle, who instead of amusing himself by searching for profane Ornaments, employed all his art and Eloquence in the continuall meditation of the greatness of Jesus Christ. *Non doctas fabulas secuti notam fecimus vobis Jesu Christi virtutem, speculatores facti illius magnitudinis.*

XXI.

The discourses most proper for the Pulpit, are not those that are most sublime, and most florid, but such as are plainest and most edifing. And therefore that humour is much to be blamed, which hath bin

of

of late in vogue amongſt Divines, of deſigning to be witty and ingenious in the diſtribution of their diſcourſes; a way very taking with the Ladies. Such was the diviſion of a late Preacher, who being to treat concerning ſufferings, thought himſelf very happy in having ſhewed in two parts of his ſermon, *the ſufferings in pleaſures, and the pleaſures in ſufferings.* But this kind of affectation appeares ſo Boyiſh, hath ſo much the aire of a Sophiſter, and ſo little of the gravity of the Pulpit, that any who have the leaſt grain of reaſon and good ſence, ſhake their heads at the expreſſions of ſuch declamers. For in theſe farfetch'd antitheſes, that ſeem ſo witty, there is very ſeldome any thing of ſolidity. The parts themſelves, if you examine them well, are often compriſed one in another, and ſometimes are but in effect the ſame thing though two in appearance. And after

ter all he is in danger of weakning his ſubject, that is too curious in endeavoring to give a grace to his expreſſion, which would be more powerfull, if twas leſſe artificiall. But this reliſh being falſe, and having in it too much of a declamer, men begin to be diſabuſed in it; and there are none now but young divines, that aime to be witty in the dividing their diſcourſes; a method very different from that of St. *Chryſoſtome*, and the great men of former ages, who found that thoſe diſtributions, which were moſt common, as being naturall, were allwayes the beſt. They are very much miſtaken who would gain the reputation of witts, in ſuch things as theſe, which can never ſucceed will, but by being naturall, plaine, and rationall.

XXII.

Nothing ſucceeded better with the Apoſtles in propagating the Goſpell, then their practiſe of it.

Their

Their example was the beſt inſtruction; and their preaching became more powerfull by their humility, their mortification, and their poverty, then by their reaſonings and diſcourſes. And certainly Chriſtianity can never be enforced better then by the life and good manners of thoſe that preach it. The [a] Eloquence of Jeſus Chriſt was to do firſt thoſe things which he taught. He that preaches ſtrict & ſevere morals with a ſanguine and ruddy complexion, will not eaſily perſwade by what he teaches, it being probable he practiſeth not himſelf; his [b] face deſtroys his arguments. All the world hath bin witnes of his ill ſucceſ, who, notwithſtanding his zeale to appear terrible and ſevere, made no impreſſion on the minds of his audience, becauſe the rigour of his life had not at all taken downe his plumpneſſe of body, nor altered

[a] *Cœpit facere & docere. Act.* 1.

[b] *Ne vultu deſtrue dicta tuo. Ovid.*

his

his complexion; and moſt people regarded more his lookes then his arguments. Such a countenance gives no little ſatisfaction to thoſe that cannot reſolve to put in practiſe that ſeverity, which the ſanguin Preacher enforced with ſo much zeal. Not but that the common people, whoſe underſtandings are very ſhallow, may eaſily be impoſed upon by the Preacher; but in this they cannot be deceived; they judge by that which is ſenſible; and though a man may Preach very good matter, yet if his manners are ſuſpected, his reaſons will be ſoe too. Tis ſometimes alſo requiſite to ſpeake but little to perſwade much, for every thing ſeemes falſe in a Preacher that hath the repute of amplifying and ſpeaking largely.

XXIII.

Men are ſo well ſatisfied of the truth of this laſt reflection, that it is

Impoſuimus populo, Oratores viſi ſumus. Cic. in Brut.

the

the usuall artifice of Preachers to impose on their auditory, and pretend to be others then they really are. The moralls they preach are as severe, as those they practise soft and easy. And because in Preaching the Gospell they are to endeavor the edification of their Auditors, they have no other way to keep up the holines of their profession, then by taking upon them at least the appearances of severity, though they are resolved to lead a life that hath but little of it's effects. But of all the pretended zealots, who desire to be distinguished from others by the austerity of their lives, the most dangerous are the fantastic, presumptious, and mean spirited enthusiasts, that Preach to the people Chimericall devotions, and the meer fancies of their distempered brains; who without making any distinction between that which is essentiall, and that which is not, carry every thing

to

to the higheſt extremity. I know there are ſome, that doe it with an honeſt intention, without any cunning or deſigne; becauſe they have an imagination naturally ſtrong, which being ſeconded with a ſhallow intellect, miſapprehends the Goſpell truths. Reaſon is not the maſter faculty in them, but abandons it ſelf to the conduct of imagination, and that being violent and heady, all that is ſaid by it's impreſſions is ſo too. We muſt be therefore carefull to avoid Preachers and ſpirituall guides of this Character, who may occaſion very great diſorders among the people, eſpecially the women, who are naturally weak and ignorant; for the more extravagant their director is, and his conduct extraordinary, the more greedily they ſwallow his opinions. This diſorder is but too frequent in theſe times, as alſo that of falſe Zealots, whoſe vertue is onely counter-

ſelf which hath bin the occaſion that devotion hath ſo much bin cried downe; of which at preſent ſome make a kind of Intrigue, and trade, to diſtinguiſh themſelves from other perſons. But certainly they are not very devout, who endeavour to make themſelves remarkable by profeſſing Godlineſſe.

XXIV.

How many are there that by the vehemence of their diſcourſe ſtun and make deaf their audience, perpetually calling upon them to amend their lives, whilſt they themſelves take no care at all to quit ſuch faults as they are obnoxious to. They ſtudy the Fathers, School-Divinity, Rhetoric, and every thing that may improve their learning, but neglect to ſtudy themſelves. Their bad pronunciation, their mine, their grimaces, their action, their unbecoming geſtures, and every thing that is diſguſtfull in their be-

behaviour continues ſtill; and by this neglect of themſelves they ſpoil oftentimes their other good naturall qualities, that might be employ'd with great advantage if they would take the paines to bethinke themſelves. But how can they be ſo negligent of themſelves without giving others occaſion to beleive that they neglect their audience more? What reſpect can one have for what they ſay, ſince they will have ſo little for any body elſe? We have known a Preacher of this kind, who could never put of his clowniſh delivery, but kept it continually; and ſpoil'd the talent he had, becauſe he would not take the paines ſo much as to think of mending it.

XXV.

A Chriſtian Preacher ſhould avoid nothing ſo much as that which glitters in his words and expreſſions; he muſt endeavour to ſpeake properly and without affectation.

Every

Every thing that is ſtudied and artificiall, is counterfeit, and not becoming the Eloquence of the Pulpit. The ſubſtance of a ſermon ought to be plaine, rationall, and naturall; & therefore a trade with the Spaniſh and Italian Preachers for wit, is no way advantageous. We ſearch the moderne authors and amuſe our ſelves with them, becauſe we underſtand not the ancient, and ſo forme a falſe idea of Eloquence, whoſe true Character is directly oppoſite to every thing that is farfetch'd, witty, and ingenious. The true Eloquence of the Pulpit muſt onely endeavour to maintain its Character by the greatnes of its ſubjects, plainnes of ſtyle, and ſoundnes of ſenſe: to pretend to adorne it with Pagan Rhetoric, is in effect to enervate it. Citations out of profane Authors, and all reflexions on their maximes and hiſtories, are to be baniſhed as unworthy of the Pulpit. The holy

ſcriptures are rich enough to furniſh us out of their treaſury with all ornaments neceſſary for this ſacred Eloquence; and he that digeſts them well by a frequent meditation, will find reaſons & arguments enough to confirme and illuſtrate his diſcourſes. All other Authority ſhould have no place in the Pulpit, as being a ſtranger there, and not at all conformable to the holines of its Character. A Chriſtian Preacher that ſhould make uſe only of what is holy, ought to be very ſcrupulous of admitting any thing that is profane. Nor muſt he affect witty and ingenious prologues; which ſurprize and dazle the minds of the audience, but are ſo far from having that force which uſually accompanies the word of God, that they render it barren and ineffectuall.

XXVI.

In fine, the Character which is moſt eſſentiall to the Pulpit, but very

very little ſtudied, is the art of giving different lights to the ſame expreſſion, by turning it ſeveral wayes; becauſe the common people, who are uſually the greateſt part of every audience, have not an eaſy and ready conception of things. And therefore tis requiſite that a Preacher, who deſires to edify, ſhould propoſe the Goſpell truths ſo, as to inſinuate them by little and little into the underſtanding, that he may afterwards make the impreſſions he deſignes on the heart and will: which he cannot more ſurely effect them by variouſly expreſſing them. Thus St. *Chryſoſtome* preached in the former ages of the Church, and *Grenada* in the latter; both of which were the moſt accompliſhed exemplars that can be propoſed to ſuch as apply themſelves to Divinity. A diſcourſe of this nature muſt not be charged too full with matter, ſo as to burden the audience; and there-

fore that torrent of Eloquence which is ſo taking with ſome, and is commendable but for its vehemence and impetuouſneſs, is not proper for the common people, who have not an underſtanding quick enough to follow its courſe, and to reap benefit by it. I cannot but remark here, that ſome Preachers meet with no ſucceſſe, by reaſon of the dulnes and ignorance of their hearers; but this being occaſioned onely by the ſottiſhnes of their audience, ought not to authorize in them an ill aire of Preaching.

XXVII.

A good choiſe of ſubjects to diſcourſe on in the Pulpit, is a matter of very great importance, but yet is not taken enough into conſideration. Many have got an ill cuſtome of Preaching on a ſacred text the ſame things which others have done before; but eminent Preachers on this account know how to diſtinguiſh them-

themselves from such as are but indifferent ones. Tis the most essentiall talent of a great genius to make all the subjects he speakes on great, by giving them the naturall grace and agreableness they ought to have. For all Subjects being great no farther then they are solid, every thing that passes through the head of an able and solid Preacher, becomes so too, and whatever is solid is always proper to be handled in the Pulpit. But because this talent is rare, and ordinary Preachers are very deficient herein by making choice of farfetchd and artificiall subjects; I think it not amisse to propose some of those which may be most proper for the Eloquence of the Pulpit, and tend to edification.

I. The Greatness of the Majesty of God, as it is described in the Prophets, and other places of holy writ; that most Christians, who are so little acquainted with it, may have an

an Idea of it. The Preacher may render him terrible to the wicked, and lovely to the vertuous, by representing him as he is; and so advantage both the one and the other.

II. The truth of our Religion, which hath past the test of the wisest men, and such as have bin the most exempt from interest and passion; and which hath bin questioned by none but narrow spirits, whose judgments are debauched, because their manners are corrupt.

III. The necessity and importance of salvation, the consequences of which are of so great concern; and the difficulty there is to attain it, by reason of the uncertainty of death, which may surprize us every moment.

IV. The greatness of the benefit of our redemption, and the unspeakable goodness of our redeemer, with the returnes he hath deserved

from

from us for all his sufferings, and the effusion of his precious blood.

V. The unprofitableness of the lives of most Christians, especially persons of Quality, who doe so little to compasse heaven; which being proposed only as a conquest, can never be gained by that soft and effeminate life that is led by most Christian Ladies. To this may be added the continuall distraction we meet with in an affaire of so great importance, by the interposition of other concernes of so little moment.

VI. The dreadfull account we must make to God of the lives we have led, and the use we have made of his graces, when after death we await his finall sentence.

VII. The holiness of the mysteries of our Religion; as the Resurrection, the certainty of which mystery is the establishment of our faith; the Ascension, which is the motive of our hope by the assurance of a mediator

ator with God; the descent of the holy spirit, which is the foundation of our charity, and love to god, by that most sacred tie.

VIII. The dignity of the Christian name we receive in baptisme, consisting in the honour we have to be the sonns of God by adoption, and our right of being heires apparent to the Kingdome of heaven. This right and honour is so great, that we cannot give a Christian an idea of it big enough, nor make him sufficiently understand the obligation so holy a name lays on him, to lead a pious and virtuous life conformable thereunto.

IX. A frequent Elogy of faith, which can only fix by its decisions the inquietudes and perpetuall agitations of that curiosity to which the mind of man is subject; and which can sweeten the paines of this life, by presenting to our view beforehand those recompenses we hope for.

Fides

Fides sperandarum substantia rerum.

X. The holy use we ought to make of the sacraments those essentialls of our Religion, wherein we must be shewn what great perfection the Christian name, which we receive in baptisme, obliges us to. And that the Eucharist, is not only the heavenly food of our soules, of which weake and infirme can make no use, (even as materiall bread is not for those who are sick) but ought to be taken as a lively image to renew in the memories of the faithfull the benefit of our redemption, which should never be effaced out of the heart of a Christian.

XI. The sufferings, humiliations, poverty, disappointments, that are the Christian beatitudes, and the furtherance of our way to heaven, as greatness and honours are the obstacles in our journy thither.

XII. To instruct the faithfull in in that spirit of fear and trembling

with

with which they ought to work out their salvation, according to the advice of the Apostle. Nor will it be amisse to sound often in the eares of sinners the terrours of Gods judgments, & wake them out of that lethargy into which their sinns have plunged them: as also to terrify the godly too, in representing frequently to them the danger they run, by neglecting the least of Gods Graces, who punisheth so severely the contempt and abuse of them.

XIII. The reliance on God; to which men are to be excited, by frequent discourses of Providence; which many regard but little by reason of an ill custome they have to impute all the events of things either to chance or their owne industry, not considering that passage in the Gospell, that not one haire of our head falls to the ground, that is, nothing happens in the world, even of those things that seem most

indifferent, but by the expreſs order of Providence; which we are bound in duty to acknowledg and adore in every thing that comes to paſſe.

XIV. The obedience and ſubmiſſion which we owe to the authority and determinations of the Church; not only becauſe it preſerves us from that diſorder, wch otherwiſe muſt deſtroy all ſocieties, but alſo becauſe it directs us, in matters of faith, and practice; without which we ſhould be continually expoſed to the mercy of our extravagant imaginations, and diſorderly and paſſionate deſires, and ſo religion which ought to be the moſt firm and ſtable thing in the world, would become the moſt light and uncertain.

XV. The power of Gods word, that converts ſinners, and confounds the wiſdome of the world by the mouth of unlearned men.

XVI. The examples of Saints and

and holy men, which are to be propos'd to the faithfull, as lively patterns of that Piety which God requires, in the ſeveral varieties of ſtates and callings.

XVII. To conclude, the ſad unhappineſs of moſt men, eſpecially perſons of Quality, who follow after falſhood, and lies, and employ their underſtanding about chimeras, and meer illuſions, which they make uſe of to defend their irreligious tenets.

There are many other ſubjects of this nature, as the eſſentiall character of a Chriſtian, viz. the love of our neighbor, with an univerſall charity, that excludes not our greateſt enemies. The Pardon of injuries; a ſubmiſſion to the will of God in adverſity; almes giving; ſelf denyall; the emprovement of time, and Gods graces; repentance; the inconſiſtence of wordly intereſts with the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity: the ha-

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tred of ſin; the care of working out ſalvation; the Omnipreſence of God; zeale in his ſervice; Prayer; and other things, that may affect the mind, and contribute to the edification of the hearers; which ought to be the cheifeſt aime of Preachers. They cannot often enough recommend to the people that purity which the holineſs of our religion requires, and which cannot be obtain'd but by withdrawing from the tumult and temptations of the world; too much converſe in ſecular affairs, engages the moſt holy Perſon to draw in poyſonous and infected Air, which notwithſtanding all caution will empair his ſpiritual health. Which the holy Martyr *Agatha* did ſo well underſtand, that ſhe bleſſed God for having taken from her the love of the World. *Qui tulisti à me amorem ſeculi.* And indeed he generally is the beſt Chriſtian who is moſt retir'd: and the moſt private, is the ſureſt way to Heaven.

To

To conclude these Reflections on the use of the Eloquence of the Pulpit, it remaines that I propose some pattern, after which those who have good naturall parts may form to themselves a character of this Eloquence: which I shall do by giving a description of two of the most accomplisht Preachers that I have known in this Age. How extraordinary soever they appear by the draught I make of them, those who have heard them will acknowledge that I have not represented them more perfect then they were; and that these are not Preachers in Idea, but really such as I make them, that no man may imagine I have swerv'd from, or exceeded the truth.

The former had the best naturall genius for Eloquence in the world; He was of a good personage, of a modest, grave, comely, and compleat behaviour. He gain'd respect to himself by giving it to his audi-

ence. His voice was not extraordinary loud, but was ſtrong and firm enough, and had ſomething in it ſo ſtrangely taking, that made him liſtned to, as ſoon as he began to ſpeak with the greateſt attention imaginable. The qualities of his mind correſponded to his exterior perfections; he had a quick apprehenſion, exquiſite underſtanding, right perception, comprehenſive knowledge, clear fancy, and a ſolid judgment. His great talent was a profound skill in School-Divinity, which he underſtood better then the Profeſſors of it themſelves, whereby he was enabled to ſtate all difficulties with accurateneſs and perſpicuity. He was alſo exceedingly well verſed in the Fathers, wch he uſually applied ſo happily and with ſuch addreſſe, that they ſeem'd to have writ every thing onely for him. But nothing heightned more the eminence of his abilities, then his admirable Eloquence, which he

employed ſo advantagiouſly, as to make what impreſſions he pleaſed on the minds of his Audience, by the grace and agreablenes he gave to the things he diſcourſed on. His arguments ſo ſuſtained one the other, that the latter were always ſtronger then the former. And beſides that there was nothing counterfeit or ſophiſticated and impertinent in his reaſonings, they being all ſolid, the force of his ſpeaking was augmented as it were by degrees, ſo as to heighten its vigour, and affect the mind more at the end then at the beginning. In fine, his beſt talent was fully to enlighten the underſtanding, and ſtrongly affect the heart. All his diſcourſes were very clear and perſpicuous, and after he had caſt into the mind the ſeed of thoſe motions he deſigned to make, by giving it forcible convictions, he ſet all the ſprings of the ſoul a going, by thoſe movements which he judged it capa-

capable of being affected with; he inflam'd the heart, by the heat & ardour of paſſion, in the art of which he had inſtructed himſelf by a peculiar Method of his own. His auditors began at firſt to hear him with pleaſure, becauſe he enter'd into their ſoul by the inſinuation of his Eloquence; and they never were ſo unwilling he ſhould end, as when he was at a concluſion; for even in thoſe laſt moments he had poſſeſſion of the ſoul, and being abſolute maſter there, might doe what he pleaſed. He had the art of affecting the mind in ſo eminent a degree, that I have known ſeverall debauched perſons reſolve not to heare him, for feare of being forced to yeeld to the ſtrength of his reaſons; as moſt were that heard him. But yet nothing ſpoke more to his advantage then the profound ſilence of his hearers, when he finiſh'd his ſermon. One might ſee his auditors riſe from their ſeats with a pale counte-

nance and a dejected look, and goe out of the Church penſive and moved without ſpeaking a word; eſpecially when he preached on ſubjects that were proper to affect, and took an occaſion to enforce terrour; which he was often uſed to doe, being convinced of the truth of this maxime, *Naturaliter plus valet apud plurimos malorum timor quam ſpes Bonorum.* For certainly the minds of the vulgar are leſſe moved by the hope of good, then the fear of evill; which made him ſay, that a preacher ought almoſt always to preach terrour: which was his Character. But as he preached ſometimes when he was indiſpoſed, which the greateſt men frequently are, he ſaid many things ſo flat, as would hardly have bin pardonable in him, if he had not ſet them off with his pathetic and moving delivery, which indeed was his chief excellency.

The other Preacher, which I have knowne, had all the naturall abili-

ties

ties, and I dare ſay the learning of the former, but he had them in a different manner. Never had any Orator more art then he, nor more care to conceale it: for under the appearance of a careleſſe and negligent aire, he cover'd the greateſt artifice imaginable. This negligence was accompanied with ſo many graces, that it was always charming, becauſe men were perſwaded by his manner of ſpeaking, that he thought of nothing leſſe. His ſoveraign talent was the skill he had to make beleive that all his art was naturall, which he concealed under a moſt affected negligence; and ſo his audience abandoning themſelves to the pleaſure they took in hearing him, were willingly carryed away without the leaſt doubt or ſuſpicion. As his arguments were ſolid, and he knew how to urge them to the beſt advantage, he made very great impreſſions on the heart; but his manner of deli-

delivering them was ſo agreable, that none could heare him without being enchanted. That was the uſuall effect of his Eloquence, which conſiſted leſſe in words and things, then in the manner of conceiving and expreſſing them. And ſo having the art to pleaſe in what ever he ſaid, and charm his audience whenſoever he ſpoke he was always Eloquent, becauſe he always perſwaded. He knew how to intermix the force of reaſoning with that of authority and example with ſuch exactnes, as made every thing excellent that he ſaid; ſo that he conducted the minds of his audience as it were ſtep by ſtep whither he pleaſed, becauſe twas impoſſible to reſiſt the pleaſure he gave. His applications were exact, becauſe his reaſon was ſo, and the ſubjects he diſcourſed were always great, by the importance of thoſe things he mixed wth them. There was nothing counterfeit in his thonghts, no-

nothing ſuperfluous in his words: whatſoever digreſſion he made, he always returned to his ſubject without looſing himſelf. By his agreable delivery, he went more directly to the heart then the other, who made great windings to get thither by the underſtanding. Men were indeed more moved and affected by the force and vehemency of the former, but more charmed, melted and penetrated by the graces and agreableneſs of the latter. But after all, both the one and the other were perfect in the character they had aſſumed, and the Eloquence they had framed.

A Preacher, that hath arived to that perfection which theſe two, whoſe deſcriptions I have made, were maſters of, is one of the greateſt gifts that God can beſtow upon his Church; it being a meanes to ſanctify entire Provinces and Kingdoms, by reforming the public licence, and diſorders in manners

manners, that reign among the people. Tis that ſacred ſalt mentioned in the ſcripture, which God by his good Providence hath oppoſed to all the corruptions that are in the world. And I believe the ſcarcity of good Preachers in this age may be occaſioned, by the little care men have, of begging of God theſe ſorts of Gifts, which cannot be enough prayed for. Let us then with a lively faith, and ardent devotion, and a long perſeverance, make the ſame Prayer to God which he commanded the Apoſtles, and would have us learn from them.

Meſſis quidem multa, operarii vero pauci; Rogate ergo Dominum meſſis, ut mittat operarios in meſſem ſuam. Luc. c. 10.

7 DE 64

FINIS.